SCRIBNER'S MAGAZINE

March 1928

VOL. LXXXIII NO. 3

Saving Souls Through Church Suppers

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Is the church selling its birthright for a mess of entertainment? The Bishop with his keen-edged pen cuts beneath the surface of religious activities to question their spiritual value—and their effect upon youth.

JIM and I were returning from the monthly dinner of the Men's Club. I had been the speaker of the evening, and was now painfully conscious that the address had not been very inspiring, nor quite successful in its attempt to lift high the note of eloquence and make the stars in their courses take notice. Now came the sad aftermath of "staircase" wit—clever things forgotten and other brilliant things thought of too late. "Rotten performance, wasn't it?" said Jim, and I at once became apologetic: "Well, I wasn't up to the mark, but——"

"Now, now," interrupted my young friend, "I didn't mean your speech; I meant the whole darned thing. I have heard you in better form, to be sure, but of course there was no intended criticism of the evening's oratory; if the address had been so bad, I would be the last one to say so; I can occasionally shut my mouth like a clam. I'm just weary with men's clubs in general and this dinner in particular. Did you notice the crowd to-night? There must have been a hundred and fifty men present, and I'll wager half of them were there under compulsion. I'm a married man and a vestryman. A sense of duty dragged me out, because the parson asked the vestry to show up. I might have stifled the voice of a conscience which is usually under reasonable control, but my wife wouldn't let me forget. Well, to-night I looked at the rest of the men, and I'll lay any amount that a lot of them felt exactly as I was feeling. Why should we drag ourselves away from home, on one of our few free evenings, to eat a poor dinner, try to talk to men we don't know, listen to an amateur quartet, sing our own songs off key, and be afflicted with the punk tenor we were obliged to applaud to-night?

"Of course the parson wanted us there to do the glad-hand act. Well, I'm no good at the job. I'm not a 'good

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mixer.' I can't jolly people along, and pull off a pretense of good-fellowship with a lot of men of whom I haven't the slightest knowledge, who probably care no more about the stunt than I do, who are about as much interested in me personally as I am in them, and in most cases would feel far more free and comfortable if I stayed home and let them alone. I went out of a mistaken sense of duty. So did several dozen other people. Some dozens more were driven there by their wives or mothers. What good does it all accomplish? We cut a good bridge party for this church show. I can go out to dinner any evening. If I want to hear music I can get something better worth hearing in some of the concerts I've had to dig up good coin to support. The Lord knows I don't want to leave home and wife and mother to sing 'Sweet Adeline' and the rest of the stuff we had tonight."

I tried to make Jim see that the methods to which he objected were evidence of the desire to humanize religion. "It isn't just an endeavor to save souls through church suppers," I said, "nor is it a mild social movement to bring men together regardless of class or position. The fact is that these dinners and smokers, and all that goes with them, are signs of a change in religious ideas; they are a reaction from the stiffness and starchiness which characterized church people of the past; puritanism began to die when smoking and even dancing and card-playing invaded the parish house."

Jim couldn't see it. "Perhaps it started in some such way," he said, "but a decade or two of that sort of thing has destroyed its usefulness. For that matter, would not the women, if they were honest, acknowledge that they are just as bored by their doings? Do you suppose they get much 'kick' out of the Ladies' Aid meetings and the Missionary Society? Do not most of them, like the men, go because 'it's their duty'? Did you ever hear of any one attending a church supper or a parish bazaar voluntarily, in a spirit of exuberant or expectant gladness? Do you imagine that, even in the Young People's Fellowship, pure joy is always unconfined?"

And then he added: "I'm serious about this thing. Why can't we go to church on Sunday without some usher to give us the glad hand, the Lord only knows how often, between the church door and the pew, especially if we turn up in the evening? What have all these social gatherings really done for the parish? As a matter of fact, aren't we simply spending our time refining enough oil to make the wheels go round? What does all the machinery make? Why in Heaven's name can't we have a religion that lets a man say his prayers in peace and then leaves him in the enjoyment of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, without all this paraphernalia of pretended enjoyment? I've reached the point where I even hate to see the parson shaking hands."

II

The indignant protest of the bored vestryman touches on a problem of modern church work which is quite as acute as are some of the theological difficulties of religious life in these days of change, and perhaps more difficult of solution than many of the questions of policy or finance which seem to loom larger.

For, after all, friendly fellowship is vital to church life. According to biblical usage, the "saints" were not people

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who had attained to a marked degree of holiness, but those who had heard the "call to holiness"—church-members, in other words. "The communion of saints" meant, therefore, "the fellowship of the faithful." No church is really walking in the way of Christ which is not bringing its members together in friendly service, kindling brotherly understanding, promoting mutual confidence, breaking down social barriers, clearing away class prejudices, and spreading as by contagion the simple human spirit of Christianity. If the minister seems academic and impractical in his plans for making his parish a real "family in Christ," he is nevertheless bound to keep on trying. He himself is in the best possible position to be a mediating influence between head-workers and hand-workers, a bridge across the chasm which separates rich and poor. Not overrich himself, and yet rarely falling below a decent poverty, he has an unusual opportunity to create a general social consciousness, and he is recreant to duty if he does not press on, however often he fails.

Moreover, never was there a time when there was such need as now to use every possible method for the creating of a parochial *esprit de corps*. Those whose memories run back three or four decades know that then the congregation lived in the immediate neighborhood, were likely to be of the same social status, for the most part knew each other more or less intimately in everyday life, and in consequence did not feel special need of the social activities which characterize modern parish life. Now, especially in city churches, the members of the congregation are widely scattered, their parochial affiliation is more or less loosely formed, their interest in the parish itself is not sufficiently personal and individual to inspire to active service, or even to help in creating a spirit of corporate worship. Something must be done to make each parish a social entity. Something is absolutely necessary if those who sit side by side at worship are to be drawn together in common work and provided with an outlet for the expression of that faith of which they receive impressions in the church itself. Services must issue in service, and service usually needs to be corporate and social.

My bored young friend had also forgotten that his own circumstances were more fortunate than those of the mass of his companions at the parish dinner. He felt like the small boy trudging home with his father under a load of approved picnic paraphernalia and murmuring thoughtfully: "Father, a holiday is lots harder work than just every day, isn't it?" But it did not follow that all the other men suffered from the same depression. Jim had friends with whom he might have been dining, or going to the theatre, or dancing, or playing cards; some of the other men at the dinner, however, were lonely young fellows recently come to the city, without acquaintances, much less friends. One is never quite as lonely as when he is a stranger in a crowd. Every city is full of strangers. Even in the smaller communities the lack of facilities for social enjoyment makes the parish house almost a necessity, especially in these days when we have become so accustomed to "being entertained" that the secret of self-entertainment has been lost, and the mass of people are without inner resources and cannot make provision for their own intellectual, recreational, and social needs. To some of the men whom Jim had watched that

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evening the dinner was a real event. At any rate, it is certain that if those who attended under compulsion or from a sense of duty had "let themselves go," in a real human way, and with the desire to get something as well as give something, the evening would not have been wholly wasted.

Meanwhile, in the parish house other meetings were in progress, day and night, bringing young men and women together — boys' clubs, girls' classes, gymnasium meetings, basketball games, brotherhood classes, women's societies, study classes, Girls' Friendly activities, ranging from classes in dancing to dressmaking and millinery instruction—even cooking classes, with promises of radiant satisfaction to delicatessen diners who know not home cooking and here, while looking in at the parish-house kitchens, might have found hope for days to come. The activities of the city parish house, well equipped from swimming-pool to dormitory, are beyond cataloguing. I call to mind one parish which lists fifty-six different organizations at work. Even in the smaller places, the women, in particular, find abundant opportunity for special service. Too often, it is true, they are merely hurrying to catch up with a threatening deficit, or working to pay old debts. Now and then it is suggested that the various social activities be abandoned, with all the labor involved, and the money raised by subscriptions from the harassed workers who (it is thought) would gladly pay to be relieved of their tasks; yet almost always it develops that the social enjoyments outweigh the disadvantages of the older methods, and the women pursue their accustomed ways with some small sense of satisfaction. Whatever may be the case in the large city, certainly this fairly represents the small-town reaction.

III

Nevertheless, even there, the practical questions will not down: How many people feel like Jim? How many of them are bored? How many come under compulsion, and so eventually cease to come? Do many of the others get much out of the system? Can we not find some better way of creating a family spirit, of rendering friendly service, of spreading the idea that individual fellowship must be kept strong and steady through corporate union, and that corporate union means even more than this safeguarding of individual attachment, that it must move out into the community and not merely hold the believer but save the world?

Laymen, as well as clergymen, must face these questions and give serious thought to the difficulties of church work under modern conditions. Grant that many attendants at parochial functions are present only out of loyalty, yet something in the way of social activity must go on, if members of congregations are to create a group consciousness; and surely it is worth while to reach toward such warmth of cordiality in these days when a constantly shifting population needs parochial fellowship, when home life has lost much of its old-time appeal, when parish customs are not easily maintained, and parish loyalty is hard to create.

When Jim left me I tried to think things out, so far as men's dinners were concerned. They had, indeed, sometimes seemed to me only boresome functions animated by the Bostonian idea that baked beans were the manna which Heaven showered on the children of Israel. But—I attended many such

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gatherings and the guests came only once a month. They heard one speech, and I—Heaven pity me—had to listen to my own voice again and again before they arrived for their next rally. They were fortunate beings, invited solely to eat, drink (water or weak coffee), and be merry, at some other fellow's expense, while Jim was supposed to be a gifted being whose charm would shed radiance over the occasion, and I was a distinguished and unhappy orator working my passage. Perhaps Jim and I could not look at the spectacle save through jaundiced eyes.

I asked the rector about it. At first he was inclined to join in my questionings —poor man, he had a continuous round of such engagements himself. Once in a while, when extra notices grew numerous, he said he felt like passing it up to the choir. "They have been singing such meaningless and saccharine anthems of late," he said hesitatingly, "that I wonder whether it might not be good to have them relieve the minister by chanting the notices. Isn't that quite an idea? The congregation would certainly get some benefit from it. It would not take long to get up a whole hymn of notices, say to a familiar tune like 'St. Ann':

"'The Young Men's Club will meet again
On Thursday next at seven;
Please bring a friend to dine with us,
Lead some one else to heaven.'"

Yet on second thought he felt, despite our pessimism, that the thing was worth while, because it gave him and his people an opening for pastoral contacts which could be found in no other way. "In the city," he said, "the clergy face special problems because modern home conditions demand real pastoral effort, while at the same time effective care through pastoral calling is becoming increasingly difficult. Many a city clergyman spends a whole afternoon in calling, with no more satisfactory record at the close of the day than the counting of cards left at apartments where they may never be found by parishioners. What are we to do about it, unless we use these social occasions as opportunities for closer contacts with the men and women who are most in need of this friendly help and may find it a prelude to spiritual guidance?"

Even he, however, felt constrained to admit that we have passed beyond the period when the institutional church can be expected to meet the needs of the day, and that clubs, societies, parish-house activities no longer carry the same appeal, when (for so large a proportion of the church-membership) a dozen organizations supply what the church had once the only means of securing, and the radio and other conveniences make many social activities no longer a necessity. The time has come when we must depend less upon parochial activity and more upon inspirational preaching, with all its severe intellectual and moral demands on the clergy; upon clear and definite teaching; most of all, upon a new emphasis on worship, with an earnest effort to make such worship truly congregational in character.

Of course there is a demand for stronger preaching. Sometimes one marvels, when the sermon is over, that so many people still go to church. It is true that much of the criticism of the pulpit is unjust. I myself listen to many speeches, as well as make many, and I cannot see that the average lawyer is a brilliant pleader, or the average after-dinner speaker or noonday-luncheon orator a shining success; but, making all allowances, it cannot be denied that

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the clergy do not, as a rule, think very clearly, or make their teaching as well as their preaching definite and effective. We cannot all be Fosdicks, but we can be clear, logical, definite, and informing; certainly the sensation-mongering preachers must soon discover, from the example of Fosdick and others, that people are hungry for sincerity and truth; that they are keener than ever before in recognizing what is thin and superficial; that while an occasional vaudeville pulpiteer may attract a crowd, the permanent results are perilously threatening to religion. If evidence were needed to prove the degeneration of the pulpit, among men of the baser sort, I have a collection of sermon subjects gathered from newspaper announcements in one section—of the East, not of the Middle West. "Thanks for the Buggy Ride" was one preacher's effort to pile sensation upon sensation. "Syracuse to Hell and Return" promised "spiritual interpretations" of a well-remembered murder case. One man, returning from his vacation, announced as the sermon-subject, "Back Home Again and Dead Broke." It proved to be only a sermon on the prodigal son. We may only hope that the preacher made it perfectly clear that he had not been feeding, at his summer hotel, on "the husks that the swine did eat." "The Tragedy of the Tuxedo" was but a mildly innocuous address about the guest who had not on a wedding-garment. "They Satisfy" was one of a series of sermons on advertising slogans, which told of the comfort of divine grace; "Eventually, Why Not Now?" had to do with the need of conversion; and "Three in One Oil" was the unthinkingly blasphemous effort of a pulpit Babbitt who preached on the Holy Trinity!

The decline of the pulpit may be due, in some measure, to the contagion of the parish house, with its hysterical effort to provide fresh entertainment through "live-wire" talks and "peppy" addresses. That sort of spiritual food will not satisfy a new generation which has turned away from religion and must be won back to Religion. Even "pulpit yawpers" will discover in time that the church must be more than a "Boosters' Club of Zenith City." Then men who know what they believe, and express their faith, simply and quietly, but with the forcefulness that always comes from real conviction, will find a hearing—and more than a hearing, a glad acceptance—by a parish group, in the minister's pastoral care, under his spiritual guidance, anxious to put into practice his teachings.

IV

At any rate, the definitely institutional parish has had its day, save in certain neighborhoods and to meet special demands. In New York one of the most famous parish-houses has lately been demolished and a new and wholly different structure has been erected in its place, to meet new needs. St. George's and St. Bartholomew's, in New York, were pioneers in such institutional work. All over the country there was an effort to reproduce their work on a small scale, without their conditions, or their equipment, their trained workers—or even people on whom and with whom to work. Unquestionably the passion for such building had good results; despite comparative failures, men were trained to meet varied conditions, to know all classes of people, to understand social conditions, to be alert in emergencies.

Then came the social-service move-

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ment. Just as institutional churches led the way until communities took over most of the work they were doing, so the churches gave inspiration in social service, and to-day a great deal of the work which they sponsored has also become a community responsibility. There is a feeling now that organization is overdone. More and more parishes are learning to co-operate in community work. In one parish, in a moderate-sized city with which I am familiar, there are four hundred of its members working in various community-welfare organizations, and working with the definite idea that their service in these societies is as distinctly "church" work as if it were done within the walls of the parish house; it is their individual "expression" of religion. Elsewhere a like story could be told.

Some questions are presenting themselves in this readjustment. What distinction, for example, shall we make between social service and Christian social service? If it is the part of the State or city to provide community recreational facilities, corrective institutions, care of the unemployed, regulation of working-men's compensation, pensions for mothers, insurance for old age and the like; if professional social service is to undertake major relief and deal with social maladjustments, what is left for the churches? Is their work to cover those activities which are based specifically on the teachings of Christ as to individual and social responsibility? Has professional social service become so secularized that the church must do work on similar lines, to conserve spiritual values? In its anxiety to be non-sectarian, has it become non-spiritual, concerned only with physical needs and readjustments, and failing to do its part in co-operating with those religious agencies which give spiritual ministrations and seek to rehabilitate the whole man? In its initial stage the social-welfare movement was officered, directed, and inspired, in large measure, by Christian workers who sought to render distinctly Christian service. If it has now become secularized, is it not the primary duty of the churches to provide more Christian social workers, rather than to create additional Christian social work? If so, must not distinctly parochial service seek a new outlet?

All these are questions whose answers affect very intimately the social life of the parish house. It must still be a centre of parish activities, and must still be used for those social contacts which develop a parish consciousness; but it will probably be a different kind of a workshop from what it was under old conditions. Study classes for special groups, small discussion classes, larger organizations such as the once popular public forum (which died when it became only a safety-valve to allow every variety of crank to blow off steam), young people's fellowships, with their serious purpose to enlist the enthusiasm of youth and train young people in organization and work, every sort of organization to interest busy people in the problems of religion and life—these will still make the parish house a hive of industry. Men's clubs will still give opportunity for fellowship, or at least there will be occasional men's meetings and men's dinners, but they will no longer begin and end in dishes and ashes; every men's club dies unless work is found for the men to do and a serious effort made to enlist their interest in real discussions of life problems and frank study of the difficulties of

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faith and morals. One of the newer parish houses in a great city has been built with the distinct aim of making it a cultural centre. The old parish house aimed at recreation and amusement in pleasant but not always purposeful ways; the new one will have an auditorium where "splendid young men and women, living on slender salaries, but eager and enthusiastic, may express their social impulses in an environment of kindred selves." The clergyman who planned it feels that here he can gather "young poets, musicians, artists, and dramatists who need only the opportunity to find themselves to bring out the rich resources of the world they live in." There will be a library, small class and lecture rooms, club quarters, adequate facilities for hospitality.

Such a parish house will be a home of friendship. It will be a gathering-place of youth, even offering daily kindergarten privileges at a modest fee to younger parents who respond to the ideals set forth. It will be a home of helpfulness, where character and personality may find expression for the sake of what they give and not merely for what they get. Boundless wealth has made it possible to give ideal quarters for this particular work, but it may give to smaller parishes the inspiration to do a like work in more modest surroundings. And just as the work among men and youth will slowly be revolutionized, so the very spirit of the parish will be changed. What form the readjustment in distinctly women's work will take in smaller churches is as yet uncertain; probably there will be combinations and larger co-operation, with parish councils giving direction. The church itself will more and more become a parish through such work methods, with parish traditions, a distinct corporate life, its own special character, its peculiar "atmosphere," and its inherited loyalties. Everywhere the clergy will be seriously considering what changes must be made in the type of worship offered, with new forms of devotion tried out and new hours of service tested. Noonday services, celebrations of Holy Communion at convenient hours, such as the popular Lenten services of the Episcopal Church (which others are now trying out), and the noonday masses for Roman Catholics during the same season; "children's corners"; the church school to take the place of the old Sunday-school, with classrooms and graded courses of study, with week-day religious instruction, with special services for the young—these will remake the church as thoroughly as the new organization will remake parish life.

V

And the thoughtful minister knows that his real hope lies in the coming generation, whatever the mothers in Israel may think of the manners and morals of youth. He feels a special call to serve youth, because he knows, as does no one else, how tragically their interests have been overlooked by the generation now passing. Because of this neglect we find, among young people of high-school and college age, an appalling ignorance of the simplest facts of Christianity and of the fundamental truths of the Christian life and its moral teaching. While, however, their ignorance is often amazing, they are really keen to know the truth. They have broken with tradition; they will no longer accept ideas on mere authority; they cannot and will not blindly believe; but they can be equipped to do their own thinking, guided and directed into real thinking, led out of

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mere questionings into belief, taught to distinguish between essentials and non-essentials of faith, led to see what the Christian faith actually is rather than left to reject certain caricatures of it which they assume to be the real thing.

Practically all of the Christian communions are now turning in force to work among the youth in our colleges, though quite conscious that they are handicapped because of the neglect to prepare the students earlier, before they came to college age. We are doing what we can, with limited means, to bring to these young people a true conception of the Christian religion. The task is made surpassingly difficult, because these thousands of students come, at a most impressionable age, into the restless social and intellectual life of the college, freed from some of the restraints which even yet are credited to the home, starting on the adventure of life with little or no preparation for its dangers and temptations. Their *naïve* idea of Christianity indicates a sad lack of pastoral care and teaching at home, and a still more sad lack of knowledge and training on the part of their parents. Therefore, while trying to lead these youth into straight thinking, the college pastors are crying aloud to the clergy at home to do the work among the youth there which will make easier the task of the college pastor in the coming years. The parish house of the future ought to be headquarters for such work. It will be, for youth and for those of riper age, a school of instruction in faith and practice as well as a social hall; it will train rather than amuse, educate for work as well as provide a meeting-place for workers. The "glad hand" will be less in evidence, though cordial fellowship will mark the effort to fill the open mind. There will be fewer "feeds" for the body and more "food" for the soul. The call to teach and teach and teach again, to think and think hard, will be clearly sounded, whatever other calls may be heard.

All denominational differences must, so far as consistent with conviction, sink into insignificance at this evangelistic call. I was talking recently with a railroad man who was somewhat wrathful because he had just come from a conference of the heads of the operating department of the road where, as he expressed it, the men had become so absorbed each in pushing some pet scheme of improvement that they forgot to look at their problems in the large. "Finally," he said, "I rose in my wrath and said to them: 'Gentlemen, you seem to think that the operating department is an organization for working new theories to perfection. Don't forget that our job is to carry freight and passengers. If we don't have them, your beautiful theories will sing to the winds.' "

There is in these words an obvious lesson for those who do the church's work.

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Mr. Speaker Longworth

BY WILLIAM TYLER PAGE
Clerk of the House of Representatives

With all his nonchalance and his love of the good things of life, the Speaker has worked his way up the political ladder much after the fashion of Mr. Coolidge. A view of Longworth by the man in the most advantageous observation post.

NICHOLAS LONGWORTH, Speaker of the National House of Representatives at fifty-six. Why? The speakership was not his goal when he started. He frankly says that he was then the last person any one would ever think of as the future Speaker of the House of Representatives. He was just turned twenty-one and had joined his ward club in Cincinnati. His one political asset at that time was hope. Thirty-five epochal years lie between.

The speakership of the House of Representatives is one of the most dignified, as it once was one of the most powerful, offices in our entire governmental establishment. Only the President and the Vice-President rank the Speaker. The importance of the office, recognized always, was particularly emphasized when Joseph G. Cannon promptly and firmly declined an invitation to attend a formal dinner extended by President Roosevelt, which was accompanied with the suggestion that the Speaker take lower rank than third at the table. This incident led to the establishment by President Roosevelt of the Speaker's Dinner, which remains a fixed, formal state institution.

There have been thirty-seven regularly elected Speakers of the House of Representatives, some of whom were not only great Speakers, but rank among the truly immortal of our entire history. They were all men of ability, with widely differing characteristics. With the number of properly equipped and properly ambitious men in every Congress eagerly aspiring to the position, and with but such a limited number covering the one hundred and thirty-eight years of our legislative existence, in a body with membership of such size, it becomes apparent that the men elected to the speakership must, of necessity, be of outstanding ability, possessed of unusual qualifications, with special claims to leadership, and a compelling appeal to the membership of the House. Probably the word "human" more accurately than any other that comes to mind would describe the latter requirement.

It is a far cry from Frederick A. Muhlenberg, of Pennsylvania, the first Speaker, to Nicholas Longworth, of Ohio, the present Speaker. Mr. Longworth is a distinctly different type from any of his predecessors. Out of an acquaintance with particular opportunities for observation, and more or less close association and contact during a quarter of a century, I would say that an outstanding characteristic of Speaker Longworth is humanity. Some one has said that, after all, about the best that may be said of any man is that he is human. "Nick" Longworth is splendidly human. He is well entitled to be. With his name he inherited that quality. Nicholas Longworth the First, the

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Nicholas Longworth.

From a drawing by John Clark Tidden.

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great-grandfather of Nicholas the Third, the Speaker, was a true humanitarian, whose pity for the suffering and helpless, not only the "worthy poor" but the "devil's poor," as he named them, was infinite though shocking to some of his fastidious neighbors in Cincinnati, who thought his "Christmas dole" every Christmas eve of blankets, broad sides of bacon, quarters of sheep, bread, and all the cornmeal the applicants could carry away, was "awful"! They deplored the desperate and wolfish character of the applicants, but their criticisms made no impression upon the cheerful giver, who only laughed at them and continued his good works to the end of his days, the sole requirement for his generous bounty being "need," his only question: "Are they in want?" He was a man of many eccentricities and great qualities of mind and heart. He amassed a large fortune, and built a picturesque home on Pike Street, Cincinnati, afterward and for many years occupied by Mr. Charles P. Taft, brother of the Chief Justice of the United States. He interested himself in the culture of grapes along the Ohio River, and brought over a large number of French peasants to cultivate the vineyards. The vintage of the year his golden wedding was celebrated in the fifties was called the "Golden Wedding Wine," a keg of which having been sent to the poet Longfellow, old friend of the family, inspired the writing of one of his most graceful and popular poems, the one in praise of wine, eulogizing "The Queen of the West," which gave to Cincinnati her sobriquet of "Queen City of the West." Nicholas the First was a gay "cut-up," but in his soul the white fire ever glowed, and he still lives because of his great humanity.

The father of the Speaker, Nicholas the Second, like Nicholas the First, was a thorough humanitarian. The sorrows, the troubles, the poverty of the masses he made his own. He died from pneumonia contracted by taking off his topcoat one bitter night in Columbus to wrap about an unfortunate fellow creature on a street corner. He was of brilliant intellect, a keen lawyer, ripe scholar and poet, devoted to music, as well as to out-of-door sports, a great hunter and fisherman, most hospitable and companionable of men. He was an able judge and filled the office with distinction, but it always oppressed him. Often he remarked to his intimates: "I have too much already. There are men who have worked a lifetime to win what has been given me without effort."

From his grandfather, Joseph Longworth, the Speaker undoubtedly inherited his sublime serenity, as well as love of the artistic. Possessed of ample fortune, Joseph Longworth lived a life of absolute serenity and happiness in "Rookwood" in the midst of a glorious forest park on the East Hill, Cincinnati, still the home of the family, and his grave is under one of the great oaks of the park. His servants were old servitors who were devoted to him. He was an art connoisseur. For years his magnificent collection of camel's-hair shawls, the best in the country, he kept under glass in his picture-gallery at Rookwood, and later it was transferred to the Art Museum. His tastes were essentially artistic. He was a patron of sculptors and artists. He was a founder of the Art School, and its liberal donor. He married a Miss Rives, of Virginia, whose family was long identified with American diplomacy.

Another helpful characteristic in any line of endeavor, possessed by Speaker

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Longworth in marked degree, is good judgment. He exhibited that in the selection of his parents. He comes of fine American stock. Few families in the American aristocracy of blood and brains can boast a better record. The Grand Old Man of New York, Chauncey M. Depew, responding to the toast, "How to bring up other people's children," once said: "Give them good fathers and mothers." Happily, "Nick" thought of that in time.

If heredity really counts, Speaker Longworth is a perfect example.

The Speaker says the House has a saving sense of humor, and that it has often turned the scale in difficult situations. He himself not only has a highly developed sense of humor, but the sense which enables him quickly to take advantage of this element in dealing with situations unexpectedly arising in the House.

He has a droll keen wit. He sat next to the late President Harding during their service in the Ohio Senate. He had offered an amendment to a pending bill to abolish pigeon-shooting. Senator Harding arose and solemnly said, "I want to make a serious speech about this amendment," whereupon the future Speaker promptly said: "If the gentleman intends to make a serious speech, I would rather withdraw the amendment."

When the much-discussed Mellon tax bill was before the House, Mr. Longworth realized that it could not be passed as presented, and so advised the administration. Being an admittedly sound bill, Mr. Mellon, wholly without legislative experience, could not see why, so he made inquiry of Mr. Longworth, who, instead of going into a laborious and serious explanation, replied:

"Mary had a little lamb,
Her fleece was white as snow,
She followed her to Pittsburgh one day,
Now look at the darn thing!"

Nature was lavish in her gifts to Nick Longworth, mentally and physically, and he has developed both. He evidently believes in the psychology of clothes; he is always well tailored. He has a well-set-up, well-groomed body, a magnificent physical organization capable of sustaining the mental activities he has assiduously cultivated from his youth. One writer has described Speaker Longworth as "debonair" rather than "rugged." He is. "Polished, suave, affable, easy of approach." He is. In saying also that the House would soon understand that beneath the gloved hand would be found an iron grip, and that it would know that an engineer was at the throttle, he proved himself a true prophet. He also stated that while the rules do not give the Speaker much power, the office can be made whatever the holder has the capacity to make it, and that the Speaker has both capacity and willingness. Mr. Longworth contends that, regardless of the rules, the speakership always will be what the Speaker makes it.

That he has made a pretty good job of it is evident. Despite the tremendous increase of business and the perplexing problems, though the Speaker is shorn of much of his former power, under the management of Speaker Longworth and his "cabinet" of leaders the House functions effectively, with smooth expedition and precision. To gain the respect of the House the Speaker must, first of all, be fair. That Speaker Longworth meets this requirement was evidenced by the general good-will and acclaim with which he was chosen again to preside over the House in the present

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Congress. No better tribute to his fairness and other qualifications could be paid than that delivered by Minority Leader Garrett, of Tennessee, who, upon presenting the Speaker to the House, said:

"It is again my privilege formally to present the Speaker elect of the House of Representatives of the Congress of the United States. This I do gladly because of personal friendship and with pleasure because in the school of experience we have learned that the predictions of two years agone have been vindicated and verified. His ability, firmness, and fairness were demonstrated during the Sixty-ninth Congress. His proven fitness for this distinguished honor—one of the greatest that can come to man—gives us entire confidence in the rectitude of his parliamentary convictions, and makes us rest secure in the assurance that as we labor here together we shall have in this great place one thoroughly equipped by intellect, by character, and by training for the high and arduous labors which he has chosen to perform."

While Mr. Longworth's fairness as Speaker is well established, yet it is known of all men that he is a strict party man, a partisan of partisan Republicans, standing consistently for party regularity and responsibility throughout his entire career. His first speech after he became a member of the Ohio legislature, on a question which arose in the Cincinnati delegation regarding recognition of certain members elected on a Fusion ticket, was a ringing one, demanding party regularity and solidarity, and denouncing blocs and factions.

Upon his first election to the speakership, stating his understanding of the duty of the Speaker, he said:

"I believe it to be the duty of the Speaker, standing squarely on the platform of his party, to assist, in so far as he properly can, the enactment of legislation in accordance with the declared principles and policies of his party, and by the same token to resist the enactment of legislation in violation thereof. I believe in responsible party government. . . . Just as I stand for this, the American custom of responsible party government, I am against the European system of bloc government. I have observed its workings abroad at first-hand. It works badly enough over there where legislation is generally a matter of bluster and trafficking between groups, and where governments fall overnight. Here it won't work at all, because it is un-American."

Commenting upon the efficient working of the House, Speaker Longworth named three necessary requisites: first, co-operation, involving a willingness on the part of individual members to give and take for the common good; second, strong leadership, involving the sense of party responsibility; and, third, adherence to a system of rules which permits a majority to function at all times when necessary. Always stressing party responsibility.

Speaker Longworth is a genial, companionable man, as was his father before him, as well as his great-grandfather. He makes friends, and he holds his friends. He is always ready with quip and joke, to tell or to listen to a story. He never permits partisanship to influence his personal friendships. Witness the Damon and Pythias friendship between himself and John Garner, of Texas. He has had handicaps, some natural, some acquired, but he has achieved success without artificial support.

If not exactly born with the prover-

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bial silver spoon in his mouth, he always has had plenty of good American silver dollars jingling pleasantly in his pockets.

His marriage was both an asset and a liability politically. That he realized this from the very beginning is illustrated by an occurrence soon after his engagement was announced. Mrs. Platt, the widow of Senator Platt, of Connecticut, who had died the April previously, was in Washington, and as she was in mourning and not accepting formal invitations was bidden to a family luncheon at the White House, at which Mr. Longworth was also a guest. During the luncheon the approaching marriage was freely discussed, as well as the elaborate gifts that were being received. President Roosevelt, turning abruptly, said: "Alice, there is one gift you cannot have. The Cuban people are asking to send a magnificent present; they cannot afford it. I won't have it. They are not sending it to you. They are sending it because of your father, and I am going officially to forbid it. The Empress of China is sending a gorgeous gift, and that is well enough. You have met her personally and she is sending it because of yourself, but it is because of neither you nor Nick that Cuba is proposing to do this; it is because of your father, and I shall not have it. That's all there is to that."

Alice smiled and said she did not care in the least; that she was not expecting to marry Cuba, or the Empress of China, and that she cared nothing about the gifts, and probably never would see many of them anyway; "all of which," said Nick, turning to Mrs. Platt with a grimace, "is a part of the price that must be paid in advance for acquiring a noble father-in-law. My first job is to start living down a noble father-in-law. He, the noblest Roman of them all." Mrs. Platt, dignified lady of the old American school, was greatly amused as well as impressed by Mr. Longworth.

Having selected politics for his profession, Mr. Longworth grubbed along patiently until he won recognition on his own merit, eventually living down the almost insurmountable political obstacle, son-in-law of the White House.

Although he "lacked the spur of necessity to prick the sides of his intent," he did not allow that to interfere with what he conceived to be his duty, not only to himself but to his country, earnestly to settle into the task of fitting himself for a full part in the world's work of the time in which he lives. In college he is said to have been a plodding and persistent, rather than brilliant, student, fun-loving, ready for the gay sports of the undergraduate, a chap who played hard, and worked—sometimes, and when obliged. He took an A.B. from Harvard, went home and graduated from the Cincinnati Law School in 1894, four years after he had begun his political apprenticeship. While he believes that some knowledge of the law is requisite for the man who makes the laws, he feels that this can be obtained in a practical way and without spending years in a law school or working in a law office.

He is a clever tactician, a harmonizer, skilful and adroit. As nearly all legislation is compromise, these are valuable assets. When confronted with the inevitable, unable to get what he wants, he knows when to compromise, gracefully accepting what he can get rather than being stiff-necked and losing all. Upon one subject, however, he never compromises—the American system of protection. If set to music he would

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enjoy playing his sweetest song: "No protective tariff law of itself ever closed a factory, ever mortgaged a farm, or caused an American working man to lose his job; and no free-trade law ever failed to do all three."

Speaker Longworth regards the "profession of politics," the holding of public office for the benefit not of self but the public, as the noblest of the professions, three essentials being absolutely necessary to success, *viz.*: character, perseverance, ability; and he firmly believes that no man or woman may rise to high position among their fellow countrymen without these characteristics plus courage. Possessed himself with an ample stock of the latter, he learned its true value in the equipment of a legislative statesman from "Uncle" Joe Cannon, whose contemporary he was during turbulent days.

His battle-ax is party responsibility; his slogan—personal political responsibility; his motto—make voting a habit—all vitally important essentials in our form of government.

At the age of twenty-one he started seriously with the express purpose of fitting himself to take an active part in politics. He began in his home ward club. It was eight years before he received even minor recognition, and then all he drew was membership on the Board of Education of Cincinnati. After a year in that position he was elected to the Ohio House of Representatives, where he served two years, followed by two years in the State Senate, when he was sent to Congress at thirty-four. Except for two years he has been in the National House ever since, eventually becoming Republican floor leader and then Speaker. He regards those first eight years of political apprenticeship in Ohio as the most fruitful of his whole life. He thought that he had learned a good deal about State government, and expected when he arrived in the National House to find a nice snug place ready waiting for him. This illusion was soon dispelled. His awakening was rude, and he quickly discovered that he simply had to start all over again, beginning right at the bottom of the ladder, as he realized that he knew nothing whatever of the practical workings of the Congress. With his usual good grace and native grit he set about the task, and he kept everlastingly at it until, finally, after some twenty years, he began to feel that he had at least acquired some knowledge of parliamentary procedure, based one-fourth on books he had studied on the subject and three-fourths upon long experience. This experience he once said resulted finally in his election as floor leader of the Republican party, and then as Speaker. Now he knows the exceptions to, as well as the rules themselves.

He has taken a full part in the history-making of the last quarter of a century. A close student of tariff and tax matters, he has had a hand in formulating legislation on these two important subjects throughout his service in the House. As chairman of the subcommittee of the Ways and Means Committee, he was largely responsible for the framing of the chemical schedule of the last tariff law, a work involving tremendous application and wide research.

Though awkward, green, and utterly lacking in self-confidence at the beginning, by stick-to-it-iveness he became an easy, graceful, if not eloquent speaker. His advice is: "Be brief, logical, and accurate. It is easier to be eloquent than concise." He takes his own medicine. For instance, when he introduced Colo-

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nel Lindbergh recently to the House, he merely said, "I have the extreme pleasure now of presenting to you America's most attractive citizen," foregoing the natural inclination to orate which that interesting occasion offered.

Threading the long political path to the throne of the National House he learned the wholesome lesson that the successful executive is the one who distributes work and responsibility rather than the one who incapacitates himself for the important undertakings by attempting personally to handle the details that can be much better left to subordinates.

"Hope" has been a guiding star of the Speaker since the day he joined his ward club long ago. A great divine has said: "Have Hope. As we go about the world we find much faith, a fine charity, but a woful lack of hope." "Young Nick" had hope, and he held fast to it. As soon as he was old enough to vote, he buckled in and became a student of the science of politics.

The "science of politics" consists of knowing people and conditions; reasonable intelligence and ordinary experience, of course, being implied, coupled with common American sense; how to meet the former, and properly apply and reconcile the latter, everlasting perseverance, eternal vigilance, good nature, and downright hard work. To be successful in politics two qualities must be developed and perfected above all others: courage, and the ability always strictly to keep faith; and the first is absolutely dependent upon the second.

It is just as patriotic a duty to take a proper part in politics as it is to shoulder a gun and march to the defense of one's country in time of need. Our government is founded upon politics—majority rule—and the man or the woman who neglects or carelessly refuses to take a part, to acquire information, to study, in so far as possible, and understand public questions, to register and vote at primaries and elections as intelligently as may be, is just as much a slacker as the one who fails to do war duty. Politics is a fascinating but intolerant task-mistress. The person who embarks upon a political career solely for the office, or for financial gain, has a sore heart and bitter disappointment in the offing.

With this conception of politics, intimate knowledge of the man, familiarity with his public service and his writings, I am bound to believe that, for all his jolly nonchalance and his thorough enjoyment of the easy and good things of life (all of which he found so ready to hand, rendering unnecessary the incentive attributable to the success of so many splendid Americans), Speaker Longworth, despite a gay and carefree exterior, early gave serious thought to his future and to his personal responsibility, and that he thoughtfully and deliberately took what he knew from the start was the slow, grinding thorn road which finally carried him to the Speaker's chair. Whether or not that is to mark the end of the trail, he has well demonstrated the truth of his own doctrine, that character, perseverance, ability, and courage, lighted by the shining star of hope, bring success.

Our political gallery now includes portraits of Governor Smith, Vice-President Dawes, Governor Ritchie, Secretary Hoover, Senator Reed, of Missouri, Secretary Mellon, and Speaker Longworth. Former Governor Lowden and Charles E. Hughes will be added in coming numbers.

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Here! Here! Here!

BY ZONA GALE

Author of "Miss Lulu Bett," etc.

THE garden was bright and dull; shade flattened the green, sunlight heightened flowers to thin lamps of color. Mrs. Bird's body, too, was delicate and bright, but her face was diminished as by shadow. She said: "It's more than a month, and she's given no sign."

A worn man spoke in a voice without emphasis, but having the resonance of fine glass: "A month—out of eternity!"

Mrs. Bird continued, in the crystallized manner of a repetition: "My sister and I had promised each other that the one who went first would come back." After his silence she added: "You've been a business man — a director in banks and railways — and no doubt you've never believed in anything but your own senses."

Bruce Perry thrust his stick through the fountain spray, now by a light wind woven thin and painted as by distant prisms. He said: "A business man is accustomed to miracles—in fact, carries on his business by second sight"; and he added stiffly: "I still do so."

Seeing that she had wounded him by that past tense, she said: "Of course. Well, then, tell me why Aline doesn't find her way back."

He replied intently: "It's sometimes in these first days that it happens. Has there been nothing—nothing at all?"

"Nothing at all. One dream, one of the first nights—after. Though I don't mean just a dream."

He asked, not looking at her: "What was the dream—would you tell me?"

"Oh," she said, "it was just a flash of Aline—standing beside me in the dark. I saw nothing, you understand. There was just her hand on my left wrist, and she was saying: '*Here! Here! Here!*' "

He said only: "That doesn't mean much, and yet it's sometimes by homely means . . ." and said no more.

A girl in her teens and a youth in his twenties came down from the house, between borders of white hydrangeas. She came swiftly, her body supple, her face alive; and he, with his lounging gait, his waving motion of the head, his relaxed and collected aspect, was complaining: "I say, Adrienne, I want to be shown the garden." But she merely came on to the fountain, said, "Uncle Bruce, how awfully good to see you!" and fell into talk with him, not as if he were a parenthesis, but as if he were a being. The youth, lounging toward Mrs. Bird, objected: "How she stresses that 'uncle' business with Uncle Bruce —I'm trying to forget it." Mrs. Bird looked at him coolly and replied: "Really, we *are* almost strangers, Phil. I'm sure Adrienne feels that." He flushed, grinned, said unabashed that he hoped not, and turned away. To her aunt, Adrienne said: "Hello, darling!" The two moved on up the path between more hydrangeas that followed the gravel with an enchanting air of direction.

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Perry asked, not looking after them: "Would you like to see that happen, Lina?" She replied that she was far from sure, and he threw in that the boy would probably be his heir, if that counted. "I've seen him for only this fortnight since his return," he said, "but he's a rather fine chap. After a bit I shall make a new will, and of course if he and Adrienne . . ." Mrs. Bird said that Adrienne was masking her feelings by going out of her way to be decent to every one, but that she was really thinking of nothing but the death of her mother.

"Does she," he asked, "look as you do—for some sign?" And Mrs. Bird said: "Oh, no. My sister and I talked of all that, but Adrienne was too modern—or not modern enough . . ."

He struck out at the fountain spray and made other rainbows. "If she came back — if Aline did," he said, "how do you think that she would come?"

Mrs. Bird answered quickly:

"Through something familiar. Through something that we'd talked a great deal about. The garden maybe—she and I planted everything here. . . ."

He looked at the hydrangeas, said: "It might be something even nearer. I read of a man whose sweetheart got through to him by some story they'd read together—it seems necessarily to be something they've talked of a good deal together—" He paused, looked sheepish, struck again at the fountain spray, and said sharply: "Well, I'm just stepping across the grounds to the Hedges. Will you tell Phil to pick me up there?"

He interrupted his good-bys and hers to say abruptly, "You know, Lina, if Phil's coming here, now, bothers you and Adrienne, just turn him out," and went away, the still torture of her face following him.

Lina Bird sat in the garden. "It seems necessarily to be something they've talked of a good deal together." Since Aline's widowhood, since Adrienne was a little girl, they had lived here, had talked of Adrienne, of the future, of the garden, and of life everlasting.

The fountain played, the wind washed through the leaves, she could hear the stir of Adrienne's voice in the garden, and Phil's laugh. How right the hydrangeas were, at the white peak of their bloom. Aline ought to see them. Aline ought to see them. Oh, if Aline were *here*. . . .

Swiftly, and like the prick of a rose, a pulse throbbed in her hand and was gone. Once, and no more, it beat in her hand, in her left hand, close to the wrist.

Breath and blood changed their measure in the pang of her abrupt attention. The hand, the left hand, as in her dream when Aline's voice had said: "*Here! Here! Here!*" And what nearness in this touch, closer than presence, than being! . . .

"Aline!" she said aloud. But the words seemed to be far and aloof, compared to the nearness of that stabbing contact. She looked into the sunshine and thought, "*That was Aline,*" and her thought seemed nearer to the incredible moment than did her words. The incredible moment passed. She felt no mastering excitement. She felt instead tranquillity, passing any calm that she had ever known. She felt permeated by what had happened. And her doubt was at the same time her certainty.

She looked down at her hand, lying

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on her white dress. Why not? It was alive, a channel for feeling, for motion, chained in undivinable ways to the movements of her mind, that mind of which also she knew nothing. Her hand. . . .

She recalled a day at Mentone. She had been ill of a throat infection which had not permitted her to talk. She lay in a sunny room with glass doors opening to the sea. Aline had been there, rather like a bright cloud moving about the apartment, and constant in her care. "Don't talk, Lina," she had said. "Open your hand wide for 'yes,' and close it for 'no.' " They had smiled over this, had played with it like children. Her hands on the blue silk quilt. And she had fallen to using the left hand, spread wide, for "yes," and the right hand, tightly closed, for "no." This code had persisted. Afterward, in the presence of others, or across a room or a coach, her hands and Aline's hands had flashed their signals. "It seems necessarily to be something that they have talked of a good deal together," Bruce had said. She had told herself that the hydrangeas were perfect, the hydrangeas that Aline and she had planted. She had said to herself: "Aline ought to see them." And there had come pulsing in the currents of her body that throb and beat within the left hand.

She spread out her left hand, wide open for its affirmation, and held it before her in the sun. There was only the quiet, only the rise and fall of the fountain, the blown rainbow in its spray, the wash of the leaves. And without and within, this deep tranquillity that shook her.

Adrienne and Phil were coming back from the end of the garden. From the flow of her peace, coursing through her in a quiet current, Lina looked at them. Extraordinarily good-looking he was; tender of Adrienne. But he had a strange face, a face dark, as from anger, even when he was smiling.

"I'm keeping Phil for tea, Aunt Lina," Adrienne said. "May we have it out here?"

Tea in the shade by the fountain. Adrienne in her white dress, Lina in her white dress, because Aline had laughed at black for mourning. And Phil, with his British speech, his bland British confidence, whose four years at school on the Continent and one year in England had brought him back almost a stranger. He and Adrienne were talking, trying not to neglect her, who sat so still, pricking with her new knowledge. Aline—she was there, she was somehow more present than any of them, was perhaps *in* them . . . what if that intimate signal should come also to Adrienne and she should not recognize it! . . .

Lina thought of that interval when she and Adrienne had been with Aline, in that hour before her death. The rose-and-gray room open to the warm May night, the rose curtains stirring, the baskets of flowers in the wall-paper, the flowered lamp-shade, the place-cards thrust in the mirror-frame, and all looking as if that were a sunny morning and as if Aline were dressing to go out. Instead she lay on the bed, under the rose silk quilt that she had liked, lay in that unprecedented preoccupation. For Aline had always been a flame, leaping at the touch of a word, going off into light of laughter, bright positives of retort, of exception. Now she was in some intense inner absorption, not of pain but of interest. Lina had felt jealous of her disregard of them. Aline had been awake, aware, but yet manifestly interiorly busy at pursuits at which they

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could not follow her. Once or twice she had spoken, absently, and not as if it mattered. Then she had merely ceased to breathe. Lina had been shocked and half indignant at the casualness of dying. There had been literally no last words from anybody, no preparation, no cognizance. . . .

The last thing, Lina now thought, that she could recall of Aline, was her eyes, which just once had opened widely and had looked intently into hers, and then had wandered to the night-light on the dressing-table. How strange to break a lifelong relationship with a brief look. She could see her eyes, still looking. . . .

Phil was talking. "After a little, I'd like to take Adrienne away for a bit of a change. Not now, of course, not till you feel that you can bear to let her go, that you can be alone yourself. . . ." Consideration, understanding — and a look direct enough, but sustained as if by main effort. Lina thought: "He and Adrienne, with Bruce's fortune! . . ." Phil was saying: "Up at the lake it's quiet. Will you go, Adrienne? Will you spare her, Mrs. Bird?" The talk ran on about the lake, the trails, the saddle-horses. When he rose to take his leave, and Adrienne walked with him, between the hydrangeas, toward Bruce's car standing at the door, Lina Bird looked after the two tall young figures. "Why not," she thought; "those two . . ."

Throbbing and beating in the right hand, lying on her chair-arm, went on a pressure, both sharp and dull, which had been pulsing there for an indefinite time when at last she became aware of it. In the right hand, from which had come their old accustomed signalling for no, no, no. . . .

She sat quiet, almost without breath. The fountain, the leaves, the wind, the sun—and this, sharper than all. A sense sharper than sight, than hearing, than thought. . . .

In the darkness she lay, eyes closed, trying to believe. Why not? Why should it not come, when it came, by homely accustomed means?

A month ago Aline had been here, about this house. To this place that aspect of her consciousness which survived its instrument would reasonably be drawn back, or here it would normally linger. No, but "place" was absurd. All place was Aline's now, here and elsewhere—a pocket of space, yet comprising all and identically habitable by her. A month ago she had been incarnate in her round flesh, in color, laughter, word. *She* had been incarnate. Then the change had come. What if, merely, she had incarnated differently? Not in color or laughter or flesh or word, but perhaps in motion, in energy . . . her energy, partaking of the universal energy, might touch that energy still functioning in flesh, and speak in their symbol for "yes," for "no," for more . . .

Lying with closed eyes in her room in the darkness, Lina remembered how she had stood with Aline in the garden, near the fountain, when the hydrangeas were already budding. And abruptly Aline, that little lamplike woman, had turned and held her by the arms and had said: "Lina, we have never seen each other! We have seen the shell of each other! But never have I seen you nor have you seen me. Do you realize that?" Smitten by the words which hung in air, incandescent, those two had stood staring, each catching the breath of the other's being. The moment passed, nothing left but the two

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startled faces, and the bodies gowned in color. But they had not forgotten. Each had detected the other in looks, long and speculative, which seemed to seek to pierce the other's mesh. Once Aline had said, as if continuing a conversation: "But I think that I have always seen you—the essential you—and that is what I love." That inner one in Aline, might it not now have found new ways of energy, of manifestation, independent still of its own evident disguise . . .

With closed eyes Lina looked into the darkness. And there, upon the darkness, in place and already watching, looked in upon her a single eye, benign, intent, immovable. With an effort at attention surpassing any that she had ever known, she fixed her own inward gaze upon that burning eye. At once it dimmed, wavered, disappeared. She thought, even murmured: "Aline! It was you, Aline!" And now, desire and memory being on Aline herself, alone, and not merely on the phenomenon, once more the eye hung against the blackness, both near and remote, bright, dim, inscrutable. . . .

There was no mistaking it. As she looked, there appeared the lid, heavy and somnolent; the lashes, thick and curved; the blue of the familiar cornea, the black depth of the pupil. For an instant, definite and bright against the blackness, the eye of Aline looked gently at her, and was gone.

Lina lay in a slow current of some released energy, unknown to her. The explanations of modern psychology moved through her consciousness like the alphabet of some primitive speech. This was beyond the range of all that. This was simpler, purer, nearer. This was merely Aline's eye looking at her, as in life, as if in more of life than either of them had ever known. She thought: "If my hand should throb now for 'yes.' . . ." But there was no answering tally in the hand. She lay quietly looking into the eye, close, unmistakable.

When she woke, clear day having settled on the room, as some great force charging the inert, she thought: "What an exquisite fancy!" She thought: "Aline." And there, upon the pearly air of the room, drenched in daylight, grew the eye, benign, intent, immovable, even as it had emerged upon the darkness. Aline's eye.

With an excitement beyond anything known to her in life, Lina bathed and dressed. All that she had read and heard of spirit appearance had repelled her—the quality of the communication, the intermediaries, the auxiliaries. Yet her mind had been open, secure in the belief that the manifestation of consciousness was not limited to that which men had chanced so far to perceive. But she had never divined such simplicity, such a direct means of receiving. This was not ghostly and sentimental; this was all but matter-of-fact.

Yet as she went down the staircase, saw the patient, familiar passage, the Ferregyan, the engraving of Hamon's "L'Automne," the bars of sunlight on the gray paper, she thought: "But all this is impossible. Any psychologist would explain it away. My attention is fixed on Aline. I imagine her everywhere. . . ." She stood still at the foot of the stairs, eyes closed, seeking to test out that image of the eye, seeking to bring it back. But there was only darkness.

Adrienne came down for breakfast, which she went through with her studied accomplishment of the casual. Between the two lay their unspoken law

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that not by a look should the inner preoccupation of the other appear. Both were so charged with feeling that their effort was toward reducing its voltage and not dwelling on its power, as one might do in lesser griefs. Trying to meet the girl, to help her to grope her way out of her bleak hour, Lina said: "Would there be anything in going abroad, Adrienne?"

Her pointed face resting on her hand, the girl returned: "Perhaps. Later. Phil said that he might go, later."

"But he is just back!" Lina reminded her. "I thought he had come to settle down, to go into his uncle's office . . ."

"I expect he doesn't see why he should work, with all Uncle Bruce's money coming to him."

Lina said quickly: "Is he that sort?"

"What sort is anybody?" Adrienne countered. "We're all all sorts, if only we get the right chance."

"Your mother wasn't," said Lina. "She stood on her own feet, just as a matter of course."

"The darling was miles from real life," said Adrienne.

Lina felt a fierce passion of defense for Aline, against her own daughter, and then a fierce passion of pity for Adrienne. "Do tell me then," she said absently, "what real life is—that I have long wanted to meet."

"We're in it," Adrienne said. "Look at us now. It's something utterly empty, except for the ache." It struck Lina that the girl's face looked empty, burnt out, like the faces of the figures in the last-moment fashion-books. To take sorrow like that! Lina wondered if she didn't prefer the ways of the underbred, marvelled that grief must express itself either in contortion or in hardness.

"Apparently," she said, "grief either softens or it hardens. Why can't it merely fertilize, like the other emotions?"

"That's an interesting idea," said Adrienne, without interest. "But, Aunt Lina, I've ached over the whole thing for years. Mother's death only made the ache more hopeless. I—I hurt more now, and more permanently, that's all," she said.

At the terrific young egoism of this, Lina looked away, as if she had seen something not intended to be seen. "Can you think of anything," she asked, "of anything, Adrienne, that would make life bearable at all?"

The girl's face lighted. "If I married," she said, "I might be happy for a little while — it wouldn't last, of course. But it's all I can think of, to help even a little."

"But—married whom?"

"Phil, probably. If he asks me. I can't ask him very well, on account of the money he's in for."

At this Lina sat waiting for the guarding sign again to touch her hand. There was no sign. Perhaps the thing, like God, worked by a single delicate hint, no more than a faint ripple coming once upon the scarcely detected substance of being, and then no more.

But all this was so tenuous, so faint. If there could be the commonplace, an actual instance of direction, of result, and on something homely or crude!

Mrs. Lina Bird moved through the routine of her morning. Flower-pots, linen, crystal, the iridescence of dust. Standing in the sunlight, she drew a dark cloth along a shining surface and there uprose a milky mist of fine dust, faintly clouding the clear shafts of the sunlight. Aline had often said, "The dirty sun!"—when it had revealed clouded glass or wood. Aline had been

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the housekeeper, discreetly touching at surfaces, shining, dull, or breathed over by some faint bloom. She had loved glass, lustre, the nap of rugs. She must love to be one with the velvet of the air, dark or bright, wherefrom her eye could now look out, like a gem.

In the dining-room doorway a new maid stood, a thick girl, masked by a mass of features, and she was saying: "Madam, the walls of the passage, they should be brushed down. Is there a wall-brush, or a broom, covered . . ." Lina wondered what on earth Aline had used for walls, and where it was. Saying with her grave confidence that she would find something, Lina went up the stairs. Perhaps something might be found. Adrienne wouldn't know. If she could find nothing, wouldn't the new maid scorn her! Not that this mattered, but she should like to have such things discreetly ordered. She stood in the upper passage and tried to think.

The linen closet. But there would be nothing there, where were only Aline's neat rows of smooth sheets laid in bags of sweet clover, embroidered towels, smelling of the iron, and flowered quilts. She opened the door upon the shelves, laid with linen and fruit of the loom. Delicate edges of color, of lace, of initial, of hemstitching, all exquisite, accurate, from Aline's hand. Because of no insistence, no compulsion, her hand merely moving at its own direction, it thrust behind the linen and the lawn, and brought out folds of white, some crocheted tidies, some gay cushion-covers, and, at the bottom, another cover. . . .

This she lifted, shook out, and saw to be a rectangular bag of unbleached muslin, cut and fashioned to fit the brush of a broom, and within it, neatly laid, was the torn edge of the material, intended to tie the mouth of the bag about the handle of the broom. And this bag she had never seen, had not known that such a thing was in the house.

Her breath choking her, her body weakened as at the onslaught of some sovereign force, she took the bag to the maid, handed it with a casual word, and went to sit apart, shaken and sobbing.

Now she was sure. Not the subconscious, the unconscious, the unverbalized could count, in her own analysis. Now indeed Aline had spoken to her, and by the crude and homely means that she had craved.

Coming suddenly into the room, Adrienne found her sobbing, assumed that this was because of the loneliness, and sat beside her, her own voice unusually dry and edged. "Aunt Lina, how can death be the way it is? It's too ridiculous to think of there being God, or anything, after. My mother, she was strong and gay, she was all life, she was the sort that should live. And she's nowhere, nowhere . . ."

With the rush of her feeling, Lina turned to tell her what had happened, would have told her all her sharp bright certainty. But, swift and stabbing, like a sword of flame now, the warning that she had learned pricked and pulsed through the wrist whose closed hand had once signalled its amusing negatives. She was not to tell Adrienne. Lina felt as if she herself leaned, listening, and as if her smooth content in her own silence were a kind of confirmation.

Adrienne was going on with passion: "And it's no use, Aunt Lina. I love you and I love my home, but I can't stay here. I've got to get out—I've got to go —and I must go now."

"Where are you going?"

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"Phil wants me to go with him. He's been back here this morning. . . ."

"But—*now,* Adrienne?"

"Mother wouldn't care. Mother would want me to do what's best for me, no matter what people say. Aunt Lina, the only thing that can keep me alive through this will be Phil's love. I'm going to marry him *now.*"

Sharp and dull, sharp and dull, instantly the soft pulse of the negation went touching at Lina's wrist. Aware of her own pretense to agreement, the pathetic pretense of the middle-aged lying to the young, she thought, so that one may appear to them to understand, she said:

"But when, Adrienne—when?"

"If it isn't too awfully brutal to you, to-morrow, Aunt Lina."

"To-morrow!"

"I don't want all the stuffy people knowing, who think that I ought to 'keep to my mourning.' My 'mourning'! I'm dying, Aunt Lina! . . ."

"All that is nothing," said Lina. "I'm thinking about Phil. You've not seen him a half-dozen times since he came back . . ."

"Don't be old-fashioned. But *he* is! Because he's coming to talk to you to-night."

Lina looked through the open glass doors toward the fountain, above the tossing white of the hydrangeas. Her left hand stole to her pulsing wrist, and she sat holding it, as if not to take but to give assurance. Aline would have cared nothing for the violence done to a convention. This soft persistent warning was somehow against Phil.

If she could tell Adrienne! She looked at the bright, brittle face with its hard young eyes, and knew for herself that there was nothing that she could say to her. That pride in the rule of the physical, that belligerent belief in the five senses alone, how could she meet these with her scanty evidence—a pulse, an eye in the dark, a bag for a broom!

From the telephone in the kitchen Lina called Bruce Perry, and when the maid said that he wasn't in, cried that she must find him and send him to her at once, and cried it so imperatively that the frightened maid promised.

Adrienne at her packing, Lina in the garden by the fountain. A great silence now. No pulse's throbbing, no eye looking out upon her from her darkness. And now she began to feel abominably deceived. For Phil was a gentleman, well born, educated, manifestly mad about Adrienne—there were all the qualifications! He had come into her life in its hour of emptiness, nephew to her own oldest friend, heir to his fortune. Why was she not rejoicing in Adrienne's probable happiness? Perhaps Aline herself had sent him, and here was she, confusing and ruining everything. She thought that if once again she could feel that pulse in her wrist, see the eye on the darkness, she might be once for all confirmed. But there was no pulse, there was no seeing eye. She began to feel that when she fixed her eye on the sign, the sign did not appear, could not be summoned by will, came only because of a powerful devotion, a great need. But did the sign really come at all? Was she not even unbalanced by her grief?

In the stillness she sat, herself stilled, that half-divined word within her now as soundless as the dusk, no pulse, no watching eye upon the darkness. As the tiny figure of a human being may be overborne and flattened by the hollow falling wall of the sea, so Lina felt borne down and mastered by the weight of

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her own illusion. As one left drenched and dead by the receding wall of a giant water, she looked, from unseeing eyes, upon the measure of that madness. Aline in her, in her pulses, Aline's eye watching her—what insanity, what a jest!

She heard a car on the drive, hoped for Bruce, saw Phil alight beyond the hydrangeas. Adrienne had said that he was coming to talk to her. She called to him: "Phil. Down here by the fountain." He lounged toward her. A sleek and complacent young moon moved above his head and, Lina thought, resembled him. The early September dusk was thickening the light. The scents and airs of the twilight were tender and almost happy. Well, she must be a fool to let a shadow stand in the way of these two positive and self-reliant young things. In any case, before this younger generation, with its energies of a tempest, she felt herself a straw.

Philip came on slowly down the path, between the hydrangeas. Lina sat watching him. If Aline had spoken and she should fail her! She strove desperately to feel the pulse, to see the eye; but there were only the fountain and the hydrangeas.

Like a bird alighting, one thought suddenly filled all her thought: *But she was also Aline. Aline was in some way in her, inhabiting her. Who could say that an essence, freed, did not outspread like ripples on water, like waves in air, and pass into all to which it bore likeness? . . . Instead of one manifested life, might not Aline now be many manifestations, as a single voice may flow round the world in a multitude of aerial incarnations, at many stations? Aline was in her, in her blood, in the darkness within her sight, nearer, more, than in physical life. And if in her, then in Adrienne also, only Adrienne did not listen, was not still enough to hear. That passionate pulse of the mother, possibly beating out in the daughter its undetected message. If that tender eye, watching in the darkness of her child's sight, were never divined! If all this depended now on her, herself alone!*

She felt Aline's essence, her pulse, her sight, to be in her, Lina. She must act for them both.

"Sit down, Phil," she said.

He greeted her, sat down on the edge of the fountain—she saw the dark face, even in smiles perpetually darkened and veined, as might be in anger; caught again that curious waving motion of the head, noted the ears set high, like the ears of a faun. "I wanted to talk with you, Lina," he said, and had gone that far when her crisp voice amazingly cut into his:

"You want to marry Adrienne. But you know that you have no right."

He stared at her. Her eyes burned in his. Sick with a terror, she had just time to wonder what on earth had made her speak so to him, when, without her will, her words rushed on:

"You are out of place here. You know very well that you should not come here. Go where you are wanted—and expected."

He sprang to his feet, his face now dark indeed, looked down at her furiously, cried: "Who has been talking to you?"

Like the thrust of a tiny closed fist within her left arm, the faint vehement confirmation throbbed. With a draught of fresh strength she cried:

"I have known that this was wrong from the first."

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She had risen, and her eyes were level with his as his own fell, and he began his excited defense:

"I tell you, there's no question about my right. I'll have a cable any minute. I'm not going to let Adrienne suffer and be lonely just for the fool delays of a provincial English divorce court . . ."

"That's all, Philip," she said.

Trembling greatly, she moved toward the house. That voice which had spoken through hers, saying words without her volition or her knowledge, now, being withdrawn, left her shaken as by some terrific physical onslaught. Phil moved beside her, talking. Adrienne was on the veranda. A car came pounding round the curve of the drive, and Bruce Perry leaped down.

"Adrienne! Bruce!" Lina said clearly. "Phil's divorce papers haven't come from England in time for the wedding!"

The three stood silent, and let Phil talk. He talked admirably, now that his surprise was surmounted; talked desperately, playing, as he was, there on the driveway and so informally, for both bride and fortune. Only, there was nothing to be said. "Adrienne!" he said at last, and thrust out his arms.

She stood at the top of the steps and looked down at him. Her face was cold and bright and brittle.

"Fortunately," she said, "I wasn't all packed. Good-by, Phil." She lifted her hand, stiffly and high, as in any casual salute, and turned indoors.

In the hall, with the sound of Phil's car going down the drive, Bruce Perry said: "I don't get the whole of it yet, but thank God for these modern women. There isn't a swoon in the lot of them. I hope you're going to ask me to dinner—not that I can eat any."

At dinner, with Bruce raging against Phil, and with Adrienne, hard and white, her eyes cold, her laugh edged, Lina sat wondering how she was going to tell them. Adrienne said: "Aunt Lina, did he *confess* to you?" And: "But I don't see how you got it out of him." And Lina tried to speak. But she looked at Adrienne, and could not find her way among such words. She thought: "In time I can tell her. Aline will help me."

Bruce had said, "Aline will come back, if she comes, through homely means"; and after dinner, alone with him on the veranda, Lina began to tell him:

"That night, Bruce, when Aline died. It was so abrupt. She was there, *talking,* and then she wasn't there. But she was energy still—of course she was. Couldn't that energy have incarnated in me, in Adrienne, and be very near to us forever . . ."

"One wishes—how one wishes!" Bruce said only.

"But couldn't it? Didn't it? Doesn't it always? How they must want to make us know that they're here . . ."

"You don't mean personally here?" he asked, and looked at her curiously.

"Oh, more than any personality—much more! Something close, signalling in homely ways. Energy, Bruce, functioning here, here, here. . . ."

He said nothing; merely continued to look at her curiously.

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The State of Riverbank

BY ROMAN LAIM

WOOD-BLOCKS BY W. E. MUSICK

The saga of Shantytown, the community beyond the pale, which the ordinary laws of property, marriage, even of life and death, never touch. Not only communism and anarchy but also polygamy, polyandry, free love, companionate marriage are tried daily without benefit of sociologist.

RIVERBANK, U. S. A.—a quasi-anarchistic commonwealth. Area and population unknown. Territory in non-contiguous fragments on both banks of the Mississippi (and its tributaries). Industries: fishing, garbage-picking, truck and hell raising, fighting, loafing, bootlegging. — So might read a cyclopædic account of Riverbank, U. S. A.

More specifically, Riverbank is located fragmentarily at Keokuk, Council Bluffs, Marietta, Hannibal, Peoria, and nearly any other river-town in the Mississippi Valley. Still more specifically, it is located usually between the railroad-tracks and the water's edge on a no-man's-land of willow and cottonwood, of weed-patch, sand-bar, and mud-flat. Riverbank's architecture is regularly of two kinds: shanty-boats resting on tipsy piling, or merely shanties without boats, built of crazy-work scraps of wood and metal.

The interesting thing about Riverbank is its population. It is a nearly continuous population. That is, a Riverbanker is the child of a Riverbanker, and more than likely the grandchild of one. His past is the past of Riverbank, and his future its future. In other words, for him, this is the life; and it is to him, like any one's life, the most important life in the world.

I have referred to "State" of Riverbank. I use the word "State" advisedly, of which more anon. Just now it is pertinent to set down that each fragment, whether at Davenport, Alton, or Cape Girardeau, is called Shantytown. Strange to find all the towns in a State called by the one name, Shantytown, but Shantytown it is.

Now as to the nature of the "State" made up from these summed-up shantytowns. It is a State in the sense that it is practically autonomous governmentally. It is even more a law unto itself than Illinois or Iowa or Missouri; it is less subject to the federal government than these commonwealths, and therefore the more a State in the sovereign sense. For Riverbank is nearly completely sovereign. Ordinary laws of property, marriage, even life and death, scarcely touch Riverbank. Laws of taxation touch it little—sanitation not at all.

It is not that Riverbank has a whole code of its own. That is scarcely true even of a given shantytown. Rather, each individual person lives according to his ideas of individual expediency, thus justifying our cyclopædic defini-

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tion mentioning quasi-anarchy. The code for a given individual, say Conrad LaCroix, may be a very strict and wholesome one, or for Joe Rivey a verbal one never observed, or for Waukendaw Chip one neither spoken nor practised; but each code is purely individual.

Let it not be thought that these shantytowns conduct their brawling lives by the deliberate sufferance of Iowa or Missouri or the U. S. A. Their sufferance is that of oblivion. A given shantytown goes its ruleless way simply because it is so beneath the social pale that no one gives a thought to it. Joe and Chip may live together without benefit of clergy; Joe may even bring a second and simultaneous partner to his shanty, and the two women may curse or scratch or assassinate each other—or assist each other in profane and unsanitary childbirth, and no one in Fort Madison or the rest of Iowa or the whole of the U. S. A. gives a passing thought to the excrescent little shantytown between the tracks and the water.

Men have imagined Utopias and Erewhons, idealistic Typees in the South Seas and delectable pantisocracies on the banks of the Susquehanna. Latterly they have actually tried Brook Farms, Soviets, Zions, and Houses of David, while the world with more or less bated breath watched or is watching the experiments. Sometimes plans have been devised to purchase at great expense and to populate at no end of trouble some tropical or island area where communistic or anarchistic groups could carry out a project in a new manner of living. But here in each Shantytown in Riverbank, without trouble or expense to anybody, is an experiment already set up where projects not only in communism, anarchy, and bolshevism, but in polygamy, polyandry, free love, companionate marriages, and almost whatever innovation you will are being tried daily. It seems passing strange that no sociologist has thought to record the findings of these projects and experiments, long ere this. A book ought to be written, or, to say the least, a doctor's thesis.

JOE RIVEY

To come to cases, Joe Rivey and his two women, Moll and Waukendaw Chip, illustrate as well as any some of the generalizations just indulged in. Joe is part Indian—Cherokee Indian, his friends proudly point out. His father, Old Joe, was also part Cherokee Indian, they add gravely. It is interesting that to be part Indian is an important social distinction in Shantytown. An individual so distinguished is usually modest about it; he will rarely mention it and, if interrogated, may even deprecatingly deny it; but he will glow with satisfaction at the knowledge that his friends are nudging every newcomer, and saying with low tones and lidded eyes in his direction: "He's part Indian." In most cases this pious asseveration of aboriginal blood has no basis beyond conjecture—which matters not at all, for the purposes of Shantytown. If somebody once said that so-and-so must be part Indian, so-and-so's social elevation is automatic, instant, and irrevocable. That Joe's swart skin and high cheek-bones rather support this typical Riverbank brand of conjectural anthropology probably has little to do with the matter as a whole.

Joe Rivey is an interesting mental study. He has ideas of decency and propriety, but he seems to make no effort at all to square his conduct with them. Within the limits of realizing a successful Riverbank career, Joe's fifty-one

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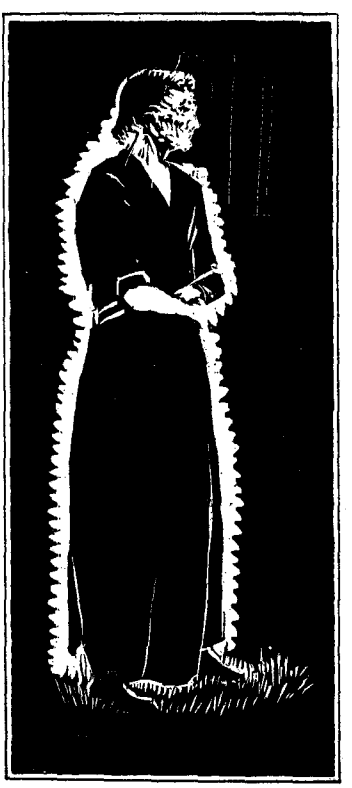
Joe Rivey's Shack.



Waukendaw Chip.

Ed Smith.

Ed Smith's Wife.

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years constitute a kind of defeated life. He has almost enough intelligence to define his own defeat. He has visioned a life of nomadic, romantic adventure, has glimpsed his dream soul-mate; but he can see no hope of possessing either. There is only the river flowing endlessly by at his feet, the sorry old shanty, and the querulous, withered, hated Chip. In a kind of puzzled way he fumbles at the harness of his little mule, unhooking him from a staggering buggy running-gear, meanwhile fumbling in equal puzzlement at the riddle of his universe.

"I've thought of hitchin' the little mule up and campin' along down toward Oklahomy," he suggests to himself; "but *she* might come while I was gone."

"She?"

"Yes, Moll. I ain't told you about her? One day I was campin' in the woods. She come up to my fire. She had some things to cook too, and so I says: 'Put your stuff with mine and you cook and we'll both eat.' She did and we camped awhile—sev'l days I guess—and then drove to town. She got out up-town and I come on home.

"One night somebody come out here in a taxi. It was Moll. She helped Chip some around the shanty (it was not Joe's way to disguise his little scrap-pile, one-room shelter with fine words) and went with me with the little mule some to haul junk. One Saturday she says: 'Le's go over to Ravenny, Missoury, and git married.' An' we did—and lived awhile in Ravenny. Then one day a young feller come and she went off with him. I come back here. If I'd go off to Oklahomy, she might come and miss finding me. Chip might not tell where I've gone—she wouldn't, damn her!"

The oath is like a puff to disperse the clouds of bewilderment that fog around Joe and keep him from realizing an Ibsenian selfhood, but the atmosphere clears only momentarily. With a troubled head-shake, Joe leads the little mule over to the bare place beneath the river-bluff trees that constitute the stables of his manor-house.

WAUKENDAW CHIP

Joe's opinion of Waukendaw Chip is definite and not particularly original. "There goes the old ——"

The blank is not Joe's, but rather the author's euphemism for references to canine ancestry commonly driven from the printed page to the sanctuary of the American stage.

Chip, sixty, greasily slattern, bonily slim, throws a garbage-gleaned heel of a loaf to a pair of black hens, and retires again into the shanty.

"And here comes one of her customers."

The "customer" is a fattish, shuffling, stubbly-faced Riverbanker, who greets Joe with a brown-toothed grin and goes also into the shanty. He appears to be a leisurely customer, even a fastidious one, for in a moment he comes forth, stands up to a little mirror hanging beside the door, and solemnly shaves the prickles off his flabby round jowls.

"Wants a lot for fifty cents," observes Joe. "She don't make us much nohow."

"Why?"

"She"—with the air of imparting a damaging secret—"she *trusts* 'em."

Joe's use of "trusts" is idiomatic. He means that Chip permits charge accounts.

It is hard for a citizen of another State than Riverbank to grasp the point of view of Joe and Chip about these casual events. Joe seems to have some-

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thing of the conventional idealism, to which he pays the lip-service of a deprecating oath or a futile sarcasm. But he returns the belathered one's weather comments courteously, and seems to have no intention to interfere beyond giving Chip cautioning financial suggestions.

Chip seems to offer no hostages to the conventions of commonwealths other than Riverbank. Or rather, she adheres to the practices of all bodies politic, recognizing no discords among their codes. Alone, she is cheerfully assertive of entirely regular conduct.

"Yes, Joe and me's married," she says. "We been married a long time. Joe's my man. He cain't raise his right arm above his head sence he got hurt, but he can help me haul cans and junk. He's had tonsileetis sore throat and aberletic fits, too, but I knowed a medicine-weed that kyored him. Me an' Joe's married all right."

But on another day, with Joe present, she spends a pleasant quarter of an hour enumerating the fathers of her various grown-up or dead children. She brings a cobwebby framed picture out for inspection.

"This is my oldest daughter. She lives in Burlington. Her husband's a swimmin' dike man. That hat looks funny now'days, don't it? Her daddy was a mussel-shell fisher from Peory. Say, they got a swell shantytown in Peory. Bigger'n any on the Mississippi. Her daddy busted that there great big blood-vessel that keeps yer whole body, and he died. That's I am (sic) there with her."

"There was that one-eyed boy of yours," prompts Joe, his better intelligence sticking to the subject of offspring more closely than Chip's. "Who was his daddy?" Joe winks—almost.

"Aw, a feller 'round town." Evidently this is a moot subject, for neither Chip nor Joe follows it further. But it is probably no conscious effort to change the subject that prompts Chip to exclaim a moment later: "Look at that purty boat—there, on the river."

"How about that big boy with kinky hair?"

Chip comes to life at once. Here is a magic phenomenon to be explained—more interesting than medicine-weeds, even. "Well, sir, I come on a nigger sudden one day when I was pushin' a baby-carriage full of old cans in the alley, an' it scared me. And when that boy was born, he was *marked* with nigger hair. His daddy was a white man, all right. I know, because he joined the Too Klux Klan."

Both Joe and Chip seem complimented at any interested inquiries about this remarkable family, and with a sort of sober, yet animated pleasure, try to remember each item and report it accurately. Apparently Joe has come into the story too late to share in this promiscuity of fathering.

"Purty little flowers," remarks Chip, with an irrelevance that from some one else somewhere else might by some fiction be called charming.

MOLL

Moll is almost a myth. She is never seen. But on the morning after her long-expected return, it is possible to get a very vigorous conception of her from Chip.

"If it hadn't been for the hair on 'er she'd 'a' been a good was'board," Chip mutters, stumping injuredly in and out the shanty carrying an old quilt, a gunny-sack rug, and other indistinguishable gray-grimed rags.

"I'm cleanin' my house this mornin',

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but I don't feel like it. My head and back's sore. W'y, she hit me with the end-gate. I'd 'a' tore 'er clo'es off'n 'er, right there in Was'ton Street, if somebody hadn' started to call a police. 'Fore the police could get there, Joe started the little mule and we got away. Moll picked up the pitchfork and stuck the mule on the hip to make him hurry, and made a big sore place and the blood run down and the flies got on it. And he's a nice little mule, too. I oughta told the Humade Society. Once we had a horse and he got down and the Humade Society he come and shot 'im. Moll wiped off the blood and took the little mule and traded him to Old Fanchers for a lame horse and two more hens. There they are. Chickie! Chickie! Ain't they purty? I'm goin' to keep 'em and raise some more. And Joe let 'er trade and didn't say nothin'. Oh, she's got Joe charmed. I know that. I saw 'er put the drop of 'er blood in 'is coffee. That's years ago. That's a shore charm. You take at a certain time, you know. It's a Indian charm. That's why it works so well on Joe. He's part Indian. And now she's got my man. But she needn't think I'll starve. See that baby-buggy. I've hauled cans in that and I can again. I've got money too. See that fifty cents. And I think I've got fifty cents more in this pocketbook."

Chip searches and fumbles under her apron for her skirt pocket. She evidently is sore from Moll's pummelling, and her stocking—the black one, not the once-white one, sags around her skinny ankle.

"I can't find it. I bet she by God stole it. Humade Society, hell! The Too Klux Klan oughta get 'er. Wisht I could see 'em like I did the day they come told me I had hootch in my coal-oil can. Huh! I dared 'em to come one step nearer. An' when I reached behind me, Jesus Criminy God! They broke and run until you'd think by God they'd take up the whole railroad-track arunnin'. I tell you, one secon' more near me and they'd 'a' had to carry off their guts in their shirt-tail."

Chip has to be guided conversationally, or she goes farther into the unprintable than this, even. The momentum she now has is hard to check. But once it is checked she readily resumes the subject of Moll.

"She give the two hens to me, and her and Joe drove off."

"Where?"

"How do I know? But I'll not starve. I can push this here baby-buggy."

Chip cannot keep to the point long. But the mystic sorceress of Joe's waiting and dreaming has evidently filled Joe with the courage to start camping in the direction of "Oklahomy," where, one hopes, the riddle of Joe's universe may in some fairer shanty seem to solve itself.

OLD FANCHERS

Old Fanchers, who traded for the little mule, is like Moll, something of a myth. That is, to some people. The frequent going and coming of automobiles across the tracks and down the high weed lane to his shack indicates that there are those who have the password to his presence. The dirty, friendly children that crowd about us to exclaim at the marvels of sketching their shanty-boat seem to know more or less about him. Milly Smith, twelve, lean, wise, points him out as he moves wraithlike through the tall horse-weed and carpenter's square from his door to a newly arrived automobile.

"That's Old Fanchers. He's—hee-hee—he's a bootlegger. He sells booze. He's got a house-boat down on the river

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by the Island, and an old woman there cooks it for him. Jonah, you're shakin' the gentleman." This to a nine-year-old with quick eyes and active body, but with pitifully suspicious sores on his face and in his hair, who has got shoved against the sketch-pad by the press behind. "Las' night they was a lot of cars there and the people just sung, 'We Won't Go Home Till Morning,' 'n' everything. Us kids slipped up through the weeds 'n' watched, 'n'—hee, hee, hee—one woman was ahuggin' Old Fanchers."

A nearer approach on another day yields a sketch of Old Fanchers's place, but the automobiles are strangely absent. Sketching bootleggers' shacks seems unprecedented. Casual, furtive meandering of Riverbankers a few rods away may mean something. So may the sound of a rifle-shot up in the timber on the bluffs. It appears wise not to keep on sketching and note-taking when the afternoon light begins to fail.

ED SMITH

Milly Smith's father is Ed Smith. His name sounds very commonplace among the picturesque Dirk LaCroixes, Conrad LaCroixes, Mike Jaqueses, and Joe Riveys, of Riverbank. These names are almost too Nick Carterish to be true. Ed Smith is too prosy for their company. As a matter of fact, Ed Smith is only half Riverbanker. His father was a river-rat named Bushway (once Bourgeois), who married a woman from the river-bottom farms. She did not adjust herself diplomatically to shantytown life, and so Bushway traded her to a mussel-fisher for another woman and a duck-gun "to boot." Ed for some reason goes by his mother's maiden name.

Ed does not appear at first. Two or three limp-dressed women hush their shrilling and shrink with slant looks into the house. No, they hain't got no fish to sell to-day. Yes, they guess it's all right to sketch the house-boat. Out on the river a young fellow clad in trunks, made by cutting off the legs of a pair of trousers, swims down-stream ahead of his drifting John-boat, gets in, rests, swims again. Only the crowding children take an interest in the sketching and note-taking.

By and by there is loud talk at the water's edge behind an upturned old rotten scow. The women are out there again, and the swimmer has come in. He is the loud talker. The dot, dashed, blankety, blanked blanks of blankesses will get somebody into trouble, that's what they will. He is no such artist in picturesque imprecation as Waukendaw Chip. His oaths sound merely low and heavy. The women soothe him and draw him, grumbling belligerently, into the house-boat, whence the thumping detonation of curses sounds thickly now, muffled with distance and confining walls.

Finally Ed comes reluctantly forth, driven, it is evident, by his women and truculent son. He is smirking and conciliatory, willing to give us a chance to prove ourselves not to be of the vile brood of prohibition officers. He accepts readily our explanations of our real mission, remembers the farm where we are putting up near Fallon's Ferry down-river, exchanges remarks about people we mutually know, says he knowed his folks was wrong about us.

Ed reels a little when he walks, and reeks a great deal when he talks. Fanchers's home-brew gives the breath a powerful penetration evidently. Ed's face is merely weak. Even if the mouth were not drooling "am-beer," and even if the sparse half-inch beard were gone,

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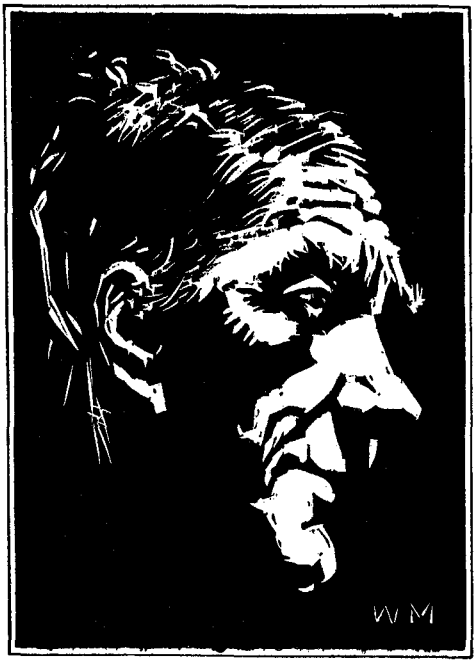
The Walrus's Shack.



Dirk LaCroix.

Mike Jaques.

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Ed's surrender to will-lessness would show in every furrow of his sallow face.

His talk is big, of course. "I'm a carpenter. None better. I can make anything. I've kinda got hemmed in here. Been workin' at the cereal plant. Got a sore foot. See. Got it at the plant."

He pries his great toe over and shows a great yellow hole between the toes. One remembers Jonah's face and hair.

"Company pays me a little and furnishes a doctor. This feller down here's a bootlegger. He got nervous about you fellers. His trade stopped. I told 'em it was all right. I'm sheriff myself—over across the river. I help my brother-in-law there. He's a sheriff. We trapped the mayor of Hampdon one time down in his cellar. He says: 'Boys, will a hundred dollars fix this thing up?' We says: 'No-sir-ee.' Cost 'im six hundred bucks in fines. Heh! Heh! I'd trap Old Fanchers if I could. But he won't sell to me. I got him once. Why, he sells to women and kids. Now a man knows what he's doin', but kids—Old Fanchers won't sell to anybody unless they come alone. Then it's one man's word against another's. He don't keep none at the house much. Hides it in the weeds here and there, but I'll buy some of him some time. He'll sell a little to me, I guess. And I'll get my brother-in-law and it'll cost him a thousand dollars."

Ed drools on, seemingly harmless. But some days later we learn he has visited Fallon's Ferry, ostensibly to get a job at the elevator, and has checked up on our account of ourselves. Remembering the rifle-shot, we wonder——

YOUNG SMITH

Young Smith is the swimmer and the wielder of tough, thick, slugging oaths. As we go by one day, we hear him at the usual vocal explosiveness. Ed is matching him. Evidently both are drunk. They pitch out on the porch, weakly fighting. The women circle about, squattering in tones declarative, imperative, interrogative, exclamatory. All appear to be trying to influence Young Smith not to go somewhere. Young Smith finally induces his father to stop by simply fisting his mother.

Milly and Jonah explain (*a*) that the men have had too much of Old Fanchers's booze, and (*b*) that the family is coaxing the youth not to take the train to Hannibal to see his sweetie.

"But why?"

"'Cause he's so drunk he might fall off the rods an' git run over."

OLD WHISKERS

He looks like a rabbi, with all that breast-covering of luxurious beard. He stands before a shelter made from the overturned half of a forty-foot keel-boat and watches the river slide by. Logs, fog, a leafy willow branch, the puffy body of a dead pig pass. The cottonwoods overhead shiver. He leans back against his overset craft, by the flexure of his body rumpling his breast-load of beard, and watches the sliding river-water go by.

THE WALRUS

He is "The Walrus" because of two great furry mustachios, drooping far below his jaws. He is shoeing a furry old gray horse—a pair of cast-off shoes on a probably cast-off horse. But the old horse is commendably *embonpoint*. So is the Walrus. The Walrus's patch of sweet corn rustles in the wind. Downriver somewhere he rents tomato ground—his salvaged delivery-wagon is piled high with crates of ripe tomatoes, ready for the canning factory. His horse

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has a patchwork barn, his hens and big rooster a patchwork coop, his terrier a packing-crate kennel. His house-boat will never float again, but its stocky piles will hold it up for a long time yet. There is enough kindling-boxes and driftwood on the pile for long burning, and the fish are running again.

The Walrus is content. He speaks with relief of the marriage of his daughter. (Does he know he is not alone in relief at children safely married?) And he has one good yarn to tell. He is content.

The yarn is of his island. "Down on my island I sold sev'm hundred dollars worth of hogs one season. Just raised the corn and let 'em eat it. No fence, no nothin'. River's the fence."

"Your island?"

"Yeah, squatter's rights. If you stay on an island sev'm years—oh, I don't exactly know the law, but old Judge Rainey told me a good deal. I never proved up—never got no papers. Feller come along one day an' offered me four-fifty for my shanty-boat an' rights, an' I just sold out. Whoa there. Here, little doggy, don't git hoss-stepped-on."

DIRK LACROIX

Dirk LaCroix ought to be a Diamond Dick hero. His name cries out to stand alongside that of Jean Lafitte. But Dirk is no Riverbank Captain Kidd. His honest pride is in being the recognized expert at finding bodies in the river in case of accident or suicide. He may be seen sometimes with a basket of wild grapes and wild black cherries, about which one may draw his own Volsteadish conclusions. But when a friend comes by his womanless house-boat, he invites him in to share — a dish of tender, fresh lima beans, delicately cooked in cream.

CONRAD LACROIX

Conrad LaCroix, Dirk's brother, more nearly lives up to his name. His almost white eyes dart searchingly about one. He makes no pretense of hiding the jars of wild cherries effervescing under his bunk, casually mentioning in the legal phrase that they are for his own use. But beyond that, even he is no great shakes at becoming Conrad the Bold. Hospitable, witty, he urges leaving our drawings and writing materials at his house-boat. Or on the step. Nobody on the river would bother them. Probably he speaks truly for his end of Shantytown, which is clean and orderly, compared to the squalor of Ed Smith's end. He is interested in having sketches of himself and Mike Jaques. After a while he runs away across the tracks with almost boyish glee. Some one says he has had word that there is to be some fluid joy distributed at the Caribou Club—whatever that is—uptown. Still gleeful, he catches a streetcar and so traverses the eight blocks uptown somewhat faster than by walking.

MIKE JAQUES

Mike is interested in the sketches too. Also in the French pronunciation of his name. For two days he labors with the foreign syllables we have taught him.

Mike remembers seeing us months ago on the streets of a distant town. Whereupon Conrad whispers with lugubrious nods and glances: "He never forgets a man. He's part Indian."

Mike self-denyingly makes no mention of being part Indian, but explains that the Mike in his name is the contribution of an Irish mother, and the Jaques of a French-Canadian father. That seems reasonable, and Mike's appearance, like Joe Rivey's, really supports the part-Indian theory.

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With a street carnival, Mike was, the time when he saw us. Had a little game. Made a hundred dollars the first day. After that, nothing.

Has been a professional balloonist—an exhibition balloonist. Worked for a fellow once that had made ninety-nine flights and then quit right short off. Hired his men afterward. When the fad of two going up at once came in, he hired Mike. The old fellow always watched his own hot-air pits and watched his men. Never would let one of 'em go up drunk. "Drink at night if you want to, boys, but be steady for the afternoon flight and jump."

No, never used the airplane type of parachute. Don't like the idea of jumping out with just a knapsack on your back.

No, never went up in an airplane. Don't trust 'em.

"How'd you say that name goes? Jock—no, Zhock——"

The sun sets smokily on Shantytown in the State of Riverbank. The river fog creeps up to gray the blue and black of the smoke. The night gives slow darker values to mist and soot, weed and willow, cottonwood and shanty, house-boat and relentless gliding water.

"Chickie! Chickie!" It is Waukendaw Chip, trying to entice the shy hens to come into the shanty with her for the night. A slouching Riverbanker oozes out from the black near the bluff and helps her drive them in. Another headlight noses its way down the weeded lane to Old Fanchers's, and a woman's voice laughs—high, harsh. Conrad LaCroix laughs, coming across the tracks from the Caribou. A boat puts in; in its bottom contraband fish flop and slap. Lights show here and there. In the depths of the keel-boat shelter a young baby mews. Milly and Jonah and their swarm of playmates scramble chillily out of the shallow water where in old clothes they have been splashing, and run here and there toward light. A dog barks. On a log under the quivering cottonwoods sit Young Smith and his girl from the Hannibal Shantytown. Since he didn't go, she came. Limp, sleazy crêpe dress; stocking runs; much Woolworth perfume. Neither she nor Young Smith is of the 2 per cent of humanity who can live a higher level than superbarbarism. Will theirs be even a superbarbarism?

They sit very close, nuzzling cheek to cheek. Neither ever heard of a companionate marriage, or a pantisocracy. Neither will write or read or ever hear about a study in a new manner of society.

To-night is soft and dark; to-morrow is another day.

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What Do Women's Clubs Do?

BY MARY SHERMAN
President of the General Federation of Women's Clubs

The clubs mentioned by name in this article were chosen to show types of work. These clubs are typical of hundreds of other clubs which have done equally commendable work. Space does not permit the mention of each State.

"WHAT would be the loss to your town if the woman's club ceased to exist?" is a question I frequently ask representative men in the different towns I visit. The answers have been varied, but the tenor of them has been the same—that activities for community betterment would lose leadership or impetus, or cease altogether.

One man said: "The bottom would fall out of all our town-improvement work"; another said practically the same thing and added: "You see, when there's any job that seems too much for our chamber of commerce to handle we get the woman's club to tackle it, for they can put over anything they want to."

What would have been the answer of a "hard-headed business man" to such a question twenty-five years ago? Probably the tenor of the answers then would have been *uniform,* but as different from the answers to-day as leg-of-mutton sleeves and trailing skirts are from our present costumes.

From the first the woman's-club movement has had a good many critics, friendly and otherwise. In the course of time some were converted and some silenced by the array of facts that meet the honest investigator, even if they do not entirely satisfy him. There are other critics, both men and women, whose objects are not altogether worthy, and nothing so commonplace as a fact has any interest for them.

Nevertheless, for our own sakes, and in order that we might have not assumptions and beliefs but evidence and proofs, early in 1927 a questionnaire was sent out from the General Federation headquarters. It asked these few questions:

1. Give brief account of your club's best achievements during the last two years.
2. In addition, has your club at any time been responsible for initiating or "putting over" any notable civic, educational, legislative, or welfare achievement?
3. What is the strongest desire of your club in the way of future work?
4. What would be the loss to the members of your club and to the life of your community should your club cease to exist?
5. Do you own a club-house?

Within a few weeks the answers began to come in from all sorts and conditions of clubs. Sometimes the space allowed was ample, sometimes long letters were added, sometimes printed reports were enclosed as an additional reply. All tried to tell the story of what they had done and were trying to do. The big clubs had done nobly, but some of the small clubs in remote sections had done even more in comparison to their resources.

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No one—no matter how cynical a scoffer at women's clubs he or she might be—could read those records and not feel a rising wave of respect and admiration for what our American club-women, just the plain, every-day folks, not specialists in anything but home-making, are accomplishing.

Certain forms of activity appear to be universal. Among the earliest was assistance rendered those who wanted something to read. Sometimes it took the form of travelling libraries, with travelling picture-galleries as a later development; sometimes it resulted in branch libraries, and oftener and oftener it is resulting in library buildings that are becoming social centres around which the social life of the community revolves. Again and again they have initiated the public library—sometimes with the donation of a few volumes and a volunteer librarian from the woman's club to keep library hours in the club-house or at a member's home; sometimes by such a movement as that of a small club (forty-five members) in Sugar City, Colo. This club, feeling the need of a library, got the president of the railroad to give them an old unused depot, got some one else to give them a lot, had the depot moved to the lot, a foundation put under it and a porch around it, then cleaned, decorated, and lighted it, put in shelves, and now have a community-house which provides a clubroom for the club, reading-room, and library, and a community-room for town affairs.

The Woman's Club of La Grange, Ga., after twelve years of persistent effort, raised the money for a beautiful library building, which they dedicated as a memorial to the boys who took part in the Great War. A free county public library was established and directed by the Scott County Civic Club of Scott City, Kans.; and when the legislature was about to abolish the State travelling library, the club came to the rescue and the bill was defeated. This enterprising club requires no dues of its members, owing to crop failures in recent years, but every club-woman in the county is active.

On the dusty crossroads, under the glare of the brilliant sun of the Southwest, stands a low building of attractive lines. Tourists passing that way might wonder what sort of public building (for it is obviously not a home or a school) would be placed there, remote from other habitations. Inquiry would inform them that it is the club-house of a certain New Mexico woman's club—a club of only fifty members, all farmers' or ranchers' wives, who have built this thirteen-thousand-dollar club-house and are paying for it all with money which they have earned "by entertainments, luncheons, etc." They are scattered throughout the adjacent farming country, but their club-house is the common meeting-place and provides social intercourse, play, study, and opportunities for community work.

This is true, of course, of thousands of other clubs, and the millions of dollars invested in club-buildings—buildings that represent investments from a few thousand to a million dollars—are testimony of the importance American women attach to their club life.

Because their town had no theatre or suitable auditorium for theatrical performances the women of Rockford, Ill., when they built their club-house, made its auditorium a complete theatre, seating nearly nine hundred. Later, finding they could not rent and keep any control over the productions, they assumed all financial responsibility for a stock company, with a manager of their choosing, and have produced excellent

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plays, well acted, paid their company, and themselves the rent of their auditorium—and are making a profit.

Another activity with an almost universal appeal is public welfare. A little club in River Junction, Fla., decided to rid the town of mosquitoes, which had become a menace to the health of the entire population, and with the assistance of the State Board of Health and the merchants they succeeded.

In Elgin, Ill., the woman's club, which is one of the oldest women's clubs, with a record of forty years of service, founded, owns, and maintains a modern hospital with full up-to-date equipment valued at four hundred and fifty thousand dollars. This club has grown from thirty-six charter members in 1887 to five hundred in 1927.

A similar enterprise, though on a little smaller scale, was carried on in Sterling, Colo. The town needed a hospital — the women provided it, equipped and maintain it.

Another club of fifty members, in Ironton, Ohio, raised funds for city playgrounds, health nurses, baby clinics, milk for undernourished children, free operation and care of tonsil and adenoid cases. None of this appeared on their club programme.

One of the most popular activities is the scholarship loan work, which has generally outgrown any club and has been taken over by the State federations.

In one of our Western States some years ago a young girl, eager to continue her education at college and well prepared to enter, was held back by lack of funds. At that time the State Federation of Women's Clubs, learning of her case, loaned the money for her education, which she repaid in full soon after graduating. She later became a leading club-woman in her State. This opportunity for service immediately appealed to club-women, and club after club report annually scholarships of money or clothes, or both, to help girls complete their education. Nearly every State has a well-established scholarship fund, sometimes disbursing more than ten thousand dollars annually in this way. Two States have each given scholarships to over five hundred girls.

In efforts to preserve places of historic interest, scientific value, and scenic beauty the women's clubs have made themselves known from coast to coast. It is not strange, therefore, to find the Florida Federation the owner and administrator of the Royal Palm State Park, a reservation of over four thousand acres, which the women's clubs through their efforts secured to the State.

But in many instances the present activities tell only a small part of the story. Like a tree, there is just as much unseen as seen. The roots go deep. In many cases the club, like the kindergarten song, has merely shown us the way, and city or county or State has taken over the work, built rest-rooms, established county libraries, thrown open its schools in return for decorations and equipment given, opened clinics and free dispensaries, employed visiting nurses, opened workshops for the adult blind or the disabled, and the clubs have relinquished their work, or what was their work, and gone on to other things. This does not mean that their interest in these things has lapsed. It would be a very foolish woman who sat down and lamented that she had "lost her baby" because he had grown up.

It is difficult to determine which club is doing the most effective work, because to evaluate the most worthwhile enterprise one must understand

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the needs of the community. It is difficult for an outsider to judge whether a library is a better service than a kindergarten — a baby clinic more vital than hot lunches at school—censored motion-pictures a greater contribution to the intellectual life of the community than art exhibits, pageants, concerts—but each club may be depended upon to do the thing that will best round out the lives of the individual members and improve conditions of community life.

The character of club work is expressed in the club constitutions rather than in the programmes of their meetings. The purpose as given in the constitutions is, almost universally, so broad and liberal that almost any work which seems to the members worth while may be undertaken. For example, a small club in Estes Park, Colo., states its object thus: "Mutual sympathy and counsel, a united effort toward the higher civilization of humanity, general philanthropic work, the development of our natural scenery, and to establish and maintain a library and reading-room for the public." The year's programmes may deal largely with intellectual improvement—with talks on art, literature, or other cultural subjects—but the work of the club-women may, and usually does, have to do with the improvement of conditions of civic and community life. In fact, this club has built a library at a cost of seven thousand dollars, and has over three thousand volumes. It gave an acre of ground to the government for the Rocky Mountain National Park Administration Building. This gift was accepted by a special act of Congress. The club has built mountain trails through the Rocky Mountain National Park region and supported a fish-hatchery for many years, until it was taken over by the State.

That the primary purpose of the women's clubs was originally cultural is generally granted. Then the desire for other activities—civic, philanthropic, economic—crowded and sometimes absorbed the earlier interests of club-women. But as they are finding themselves in the new plane of activities which this century offers all women, and which is so different from the restricted level of the last century, they are returning with new interest and wider vision to the study of the fine arts.

Painting, sculpture, books—particularly of American artists and authors—are becoming familiar, through their club programmes and through travelling exhibits loaned by the General Federation, to club-women all over the country. Financial aid is being given to American art students. Contests, with generous prizes, have stimulated interest, study, and thought about these subjects. A great deal of attention has been given to children's books, and travelling libraries have been supported in remote districts. While the primary object of women's clubs can no longer be said to be purely cultural, it is equally true that the cultural side has become again one of the most important—particularly in the smaller towns, which offer fewer opportunities for such study than the larger cities.

In the past, farm-women, largely because of lack of transportation facilities, have been cut off from club activities. But now, with the automobile almost as common as the old-time horse and buggy, and with constant improvement of roads, distance ceases to be a barrier, and our rural sections are rapidly seeking the pleasures and benefits gained from working and playing in groups. Clubs of farm and ranch women, sometimes living miles apart, are organizing to get for themselves some

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of the things they feel they have been missing.

These clubs bring new view-points, new needs, and new activities to both the State and the General Federation, and in return get from the larger bodies new interests and resources and a chance to be a part of whatever important activities are going on.

The question "What would be the loss to the members of your club and to the life of your community should your club cease to exist?" was answered with painstaking conscientiousness. Occasionally some one else—the mayor, the superintendent of schools, or the head of the chamber of commerce—was asked to answer because the women did not like to say what a calamity the dissolution of their club would mean to their town. The general character of the answer, by both men and women, was, in the small towns, practically the same—that organized, co-operative effort toward civic and community improvement would lose impetus and leadership or stop altogether; in many cases that the library would cease to exist or the free kindergarten stop, that school work such as health nurses, milk, hot lunches, etc., would have to find new sponsors, and that the social intercourse and stimulation from meeting and working with other women and men would be lost. One woman said: "There would be nothing to go to but card-parties." And American women to-day are not satisfied to be limited to card-parties.

In the large cities it was a different matter; with memberships of several hundred, naturally the undertakings of the clubs are divided into various departments according to the interests and tastes of the members. But for the interests and good of the club as a whole, or in the many matters in which all members and departments have equal interests, the club functions as a unit.

In the last analysis the things the big-city club-woman wants from her club are the same as those the small-town club-woman seeks—social intercourse, an opportunity to improve herself (it may be an international-relation class in one place and a cooking-class in another, but the idea is the same), and an opportunity to work for something that will be a benefit to humanity.

It should, however, be remembered that a vast majority of the women's clubs *are* in small towns—that the number of clubs with a membership of fewer than fifty is much greater than the number of larger clubs, that it is the small-city and town clubs that form the great bulk of United States club-women, and that these women are one of the most vital forces in their towns and cities.

Call them "uplifters" if you like. The nation did not call them that when it called on them for every kind of war work, and the spirit that prompted the service so gladly given then is the same that prompts them now to work for libraries or kindergartens or pure food or abolishing child labor, town water, or anything that they are convinced is important and worth while. Their work is unselfish and sincere, and that is why it is so powerful that it is constantly subject to efforts to discredit it.

The important part the individual woman's club holds in its own community is readily seen. The next step is the linking of the individual clubs together in the State federations and in the General Federation.

Just as a group of women find more inspiration and achieve more by working together than as individuals, so the clubs of a State, banded into a State federation, increase their influence

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many times over. In their conventions and through their State organization they are brought in touch with the work other clubs are doing, with the affairs important to the State as a whole, and with the way their own club can best weave its part in the pattern of State undertaking.

Each club can be an influence for good, both to its members and to its community in its own little place. To possess this influence for good in its State as a whole, to carry out uniformly the things proven desirable, to obtain the benefits available only to a large organization, it must act through its State federation.

And, in a larger way, that is all the General Federation does—bands together the State federations and individual clubs into a national and international organization which can offer to the individual members greater opportunities, greater interests, greater influence.

It can initiate and pass on to the individual clubs opportunities for them to accept or reject as they please, which they could never create for themselves. For example, the home-equipment survey recently completed by the General Federation would not have been possible without the co-operation of individual clubs, yet no one club or State could have either initiated or carried out this gigantic undertaking.

Another project of the General Federation was the establishment of the Federal prison for women at Alderson, W. Va., a national achievement conceived and led by the Federation and brought to fulfilment by the club-women of the country.

It can, through its department heads, bring before the State federations and individual clubs, the results of research, of study and of work, of the leading men and women in the fields covered by the various departments.

The passage of the Pure Food and Drugs Act—a measure whose importance to the welfare of the American people cannot be overestimated—was unhesitatingly credited, by the scientists most closely connected with it, to the nation-wide insistence of the women's clubs (informed of the need for and importance of such an act) that the measure become a law.

Finally, when the component parts of the General Federation choose to act as a whole its strength is that of a mighty oak whose branches reach out in every direction, green and vigorous to the very tips, a tree that can withstand any storm. But let the branches be lopped off and cut into small pieces, then the meanest kitchen range, the most casual camper, can soon reduce the whole tree to ashes.

The American club-women have attained their present position by their own efforts. As long as our women have the desire they now have for knowledge, self-improvement, and the best that can be had for their children, their homes, and their community, I think there is not the slightest chance of our women's clubs ceasing to be mediums through which women will seek the ends they wish. The women want certain definite things; they organize to get them. The organization is flexible—it can grow and change with the needs; it can throw its influence on this side or that—it has no party and is non-sectarian. So long as the women keep their ideals high and their aims pure, just so long will the women's clubs continue to flourish, and make their influence felt throughout the whole country. Compared with other fields of human endeavor, the club movement shows a minimum of failures and a long roll of successes.

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Boston—the Ebb Tide

MY UNITED STATES

BY F. J. STIMSON

A former assistant attorney-general of Massachusetts and ambassador to the Argentine sees the erstwhile financial and cultural centre as a town of coupon-cutters with an inferiority complex, bossed by Irish and New Hampshiremen. Mr. Stimson is surveying the country and writing "My United States."

THE Boston of 1878, the Massachusetts of 1888, has as completely vanished as its seaports, whose shipping for a century covered all the world. Boyle O'Reilly told me that in the sixties, in Australia, the only name they knew of America was Boston. In the forties the Chinooks of the Oregon shore knew only Boston ships; in earlier centuries the French and Indians of the St. Lawrence and the Chambly warred only *"contre les Bostonnais,"* as their monuments still tell us. Barbadoes and India knew Boston ice, and the Indies, East and West, Yankee notions (and sometimes wooden nutmegs and counterfeit money); while Boston was the only town of his American dominions with which and with whose ideas King George of Hanover was thoroughly familiar. A hundred years later any wandering Englishmen of inquiring mind never failed to head for Boston when visiting America—now (beyond, of course, seeing New York or Washington) he would give the preference to Chicago and Los Angeles.

The "decadence of Boston" is a seductive theme. It is due to iron ships, the Erie Canal, to Congress and our national legislation, to railroad relations, to "spendthrift trusts" and the coupon-cutting generation, to lack of enlightened self-interest, to undue modesty, and to the growth of the rest of the country. Also, the rest of the world ebbed out from the ideals on which Boston was propped and left it high and dry.

Eliot has well pointed out in his maritime history the extraordinary lapsus of common sense which caused Boston merchants—who had whitened the seven seas with their ships and harnessed New England rivers to their mills—to fail to see, in the forties and fifties, that ships must give place to freight-cars, bottoms to gondolas. Boston had the most convenient seaport of the East, but it never got its railroad to the Mississippi valley—on and out of which we all now live. The natural barrier to the West—the high grades that the Berkshire Mountains interpose—might be and was overcome by the Hoosac Tunnel. On this the commonwealth—and wisely—spent fifteen millions of dollars; but their wisdom stopped there, for they never secured the railways, east and west, to connect with it. It was like buying a bung-hole and failing to buy the barrel round it. One feeble and halting step they did take—

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they built the so-called "State" railroad —the Troy & Greenfield—which carried tunnel traffic eastward—as far as the Connecticut River. But, having built it, they leased it to the Fitchburg Railway, and then the Fitchburg to the Boston & Maine; and the Boston & Maine was to be merged in the New Haven Railroad, controlled by J. P. Morgan and New York. Forty years before, the only other trunk line crossing the Berkshires was pre-empted by the Vanderbilts when they got the Western Railroad of Massachusetts (that part of the Boston & Albany west of Springfield), so that the Boston & Albany became a mere appendix of the New York Central and finally even lost its name and became "leased lines." And, even in 1910, so firm was their grip that they would allow only a certain number of cars to come east from Albany or Troy through our tunnel. The rest must go to feed the traffic of New York. One ill-advised attempt (because of its own high grades) was made by Eldridge, and Gowan of Pennsylvania, to get a third competing line through to the Hudson at Fishkill, but this (the "Air Line," "Boston, Hartford & Erie," "New York & New England") soon went into the maw of the New Haven; and about 1902 Murray Crane sold the State stock in the Fitchburg—for a good money price, but the last vestige of Massachusetts control went with it, and the great tunnel might as well never have been built so far as Boston's interests were concerned; its very name disappeared from the railroad world; New York Central, New York & New Haven, are its only Western lines. The merger with the Boston & Maine was indeed prevented, but the Fitchburg-Boston & Maine runs onto the tracks of the Vanderbilt roads at Rotterdam Junction. Long after this the Nickel Plate, with a through line to Chicago, might have been acquired for a song—compared with what the Hoosac Tunnel and the State road had cost—but by this time Boston's great men had gone, and Boston capitalists had lost either vision or courage, or were content to take the crumbs that fell from the table of New York.

Yet Boston brains and capital had built the Michigan Central; the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy; the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe; the Mexican Central—to name but four; and the city of Chicago, and its stock-yards, and Kansas City's. The Union Pacific was built through the continent by Boston brains. Boston's lines of railroad extended from Detroit to Chicago, St. Louis, Denver, Ogden, El Paso, Mexico —but from Boston itself they stopped short at the Hudson River. John M. Forbes—who built the Michigan and the Burlington—was the last of her great men of enterprise and vision; "selling out" and getting on a four per cent basis was the policy of their successors; and a four per cent basis is death to enterprise and stops short the growth of a great commercial metropolis. The great men had gone. Forbes's successor was content to sell out the Burlington for a guaranteed four per cent on the then market value of the stock; and that great property has paid its purchasers about twenty-seven per cent ever since, and its dividends saved them—the Northern Pacific and the Great Northern railway systems, giants as they were —from bankruptcy in 1921. And Boston's leading bankers or merchants of later years—even to Boston's leading citizen, beloved by all—were of a different type, content with the crumbs from J. P. Morgan's table. Yet that the

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old Boston vigor and insight still is there is shown even now in her four greatest enterprises — the Telephone, the General Electric, the Shoe Machinery and the United Fruit—the first, I believe, the largest corporation in the world and with the largest list of stockholders. Yet the telephone inventors did not realize how great they were, and permitted much of the world to slip away from them, so that even South America and Central America (most fertile of fields for exploiting the great convenience, the people all lazy with heat and extravagant) are actually exploited by telephone companies from England — the country where they never could learn to use the telephone at all!

Boston has ever been full of the finest public spirit—promoting education, art, music, hospitals, schools, social welfare or public service of any or all kinds; New York, in old days, not so at all. But, when the matter was one of financial interest to the port or city of New York, its merchants from Ogden to Vanderbilt were distinctly on the job. First, with the Erie Canal they were Johnnies on the spot; we Yankees responded with the Hoosac Tunnel—and then fell asleep at the switch.

Then came the great insurance companies. Their huge reservoirs of capital centralized in New York—Wall Street and its unified financial control; the natural centralization of all traffic or exchange in one great city, which we find in all modern countries, further accentuated by Wilson's administration in handling of matters in the Great War, and only measurably relieved by his Federal Reserve Act—until Boston sank from second to seventeenth port, and, though once second (after Philadelphia) in population, was passed, not only by New York and Chicago, but by St. Louis, Baltimore, Cleveland, and Detroit; and her harbor, that for two centuries swarmed with shipping, now wears the peace of Portsmouth. And what a wonderful harbor! I have seen the great German liner *Amerika* back out of the South Boston pier without even a tug, turn ninety degrees around, point for the Light, and in twenty minutes be ready to drop a pilot in deep water—in New York or Liverpool it takes five hours. I have seen a vessel shipwrecked from my law-office window. ("Yes, but very inconvenient in time of war," said a German professor to me in 1913, when I was pointing out the harbor beauties.) Boston too has the greatest hinterland of intelligence and productive people—not elsewhere in the world, except in New York or London, are so many such congregated in so small a space; three million live within forty miles of Boston docks; and the docks no longer used for want of railroads; and the great Commonwealth Pier itself (built, like the only large dry dock in America, close by, and the Hoosac Tunnel, out of State moneys) actually used by a few tourists, but otherwise as a shed for licensing automobiles.

Of course, it is too late now. The dead hand of State railroad regulation —a cause first enthusiastically taken up by President Roosevelt, to draw a herring across the trail when the farmers were growing restive under the tariff— would now make it impossible for a railroad, though built of State funds, still more if privately owned to favor its own city, to charge other than uniform rates. State rights are lost in Federal powers. We could not bore the tunnel, buy the Nickel Plate, and make a rate from Boston to Chicago now other than as the I. C. C. permitted. We are, therefore, reduced to whinings before

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them about the differential—in other words, a special favor—to enable us to overcome the geographical advantages of Baltimore, Norfolk, or New Orleans.

Speaking now again nationally (though in this article—on Boston—I may be pardoned for writing as a Massachusetts man), railway-rate fixing may have been necessary in some cases—provoked, as in California, by an avowed railroad policy of "charging what the traffic will bear," *i. e.*, taking it all, except just enough hope in the settler's breast to encourage him to plant a new crop; but since Roosevelt got this power given and approved by the Supreme Court not a railroad has been built in the United States, speaking broadly, and thousands of miles have been abandoned. Unless and until you can get a bureau which will adapt each decision to special conditions, and refuse to play politics, all such regulation by boards is necessarily Procrustean, unintelligent. There was a railroad built across the continental divide at a cost of thirty millions—the tunnel under the Rockies alone cost nearly ten; it charged twenty-five cents for carrying a passenger through, and the same sum for each ton of freight. This trackage contract was sustained by the Supreme Court of the United States. Before that railroad was built any shipper would have been only too glad to pay ten, nay twenty, dollars for hauling each ton or passenger across the continental divide. Comes the railway commission and says it must charge three cents a mile—the same as the New Jersey Central on the level. That the railroad failed and its promoters lost thirty millions may not matter—they were English—but that that railroad may be abandoned and no other ever built may be of concern even to us Americans.

The next most notable cause of Boston's commercial (I am so far speaking only of that) decline is the "spendthrift trust" decision of Massachusetts courts. (It is not the law in New York or elsewhere.) Somewhere about 1830 they decided that a man could tie his children's inheritance up, either by deed or will, so that they could not spend or risk the principal, so that they could make no contract in favor of their creditors which would be binding on their trustees, so that they could not risk their capital in a new enterprise or indeed embark it in any business. Immense wealth had been accumulated in Boston in the first sixty years of the republic: instead of trusting their sons and sending them out at their own risks with all their argosies upon life's seas (as they themselves had done), they distrusted their ability (and this distrust by Boston of the ability of her sons ran through all the post-Civil War times, and in many other ways, as we shall see) and had them all trusteed. No new enterprise could be undertaken by them, for under that court decision they had no capital to risk. Perforce they became coupon-cutters—parasites, not promoters of industry—with the natural results to their own characters. Hence the John M. Forbes type of Bostonian came largely to an end. It was as if the argosies of Venice had been realized and the proceeds placed with Shylock at four per cent. Shylock took no risks, and the Boston Bassanio, bored, spent his four per cent in elegant living—to do him justice, greatly promoting art, charity, public service—but the consequences were disastrous to a Venetian commercial supremacy; and business down-town was left to smaller men, with narrower traditions, taking retail but not wholesale risks. So supine are they that Boston shippers will not complain when, under New York or-

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der, they have to ship goods by rail from Boston to New York to be loaded there for Argentina, though the very steamer which takes them to Buenos Aires discharged its cargo in Boston (for Boston still has an import trade) and lay there a week in sight of the Boston man's warehouse. He may not load it there, but must pay tribute to the New York railroad and contribute his own mite to the greatness of New York's harbor by sending his shipment by rail to New York.

And thus, placing all the young intelligentsia under financial guardianship, the natural consequences ensued in other ways. The French *rentier,* however saving, is notoriously an inadventurous person in business. Indeed, the superior energy and initiative—even the imagination—of the British, though "but a nation of shopkeepers," may be ascribed to this. The effect of making Boston's youth, of its best tradition and education, mere four per cent men, was to choke off their own energies and largely divorce business and the Brahmins. True, they were replaced, in the down-town stores and counting-rooms, by some fresh country stock; as, in law or city politics, Harvard has been by Dartmouth. New Hampshire swarmed into the Hub like the Scots into London. But, however sharp and clever, it may be questioned whether something of the broad vision, almost idealism, in the enterprises of the old Boston merchants, mill-founders, railroad-builders, was not lost in the exchange. Of course, there were notable exceptions; also many sons of the old Boston families moved upon New York, as the New Hampshire and Maine men had moved on Boston. In the eighties and nineties there were far more New Englanders than Knickerbockers at the head of "big business" in New York; and in politics as well—for it had actually been there the fashion to despise it in the fifties and sixties, as may be seen in the old cartoons of *Vanity Fair;* it was a "dirty" occupation, not fit for a gentleman. But here there was no "trusteeship"; and soon the public spirit and the patriotism of "our best young men"—perhaps as well political ambition—reasserted themselves, and since the *renacimiento* after Grant's time there has been no dearth of "The Scholar in Politics"—so that it is hard to believe that Cabot Lodge was almost a pioneer when he appeared in 1871.

When we come to the only old field of superiority generally conceded to Boston and New England—letters—the story is the same. The saying, "When the true gods go, the half gods come," was taken so devoutly by all of us in Boston that not a fifty per cent god, nor a five per cent, nor a two per cent, of divine idea, was expected, believed, or permitted, to exist in the Athens of America. When Channing, Hawthorne, Emerson, Longfellow, Whittier, Lowell, Holmes had gone, we imported Howells and Aldrich from the Mississippi valley to fill the niches of their statues; and they broke the mould. Henry James fled to London; the *Atlantic* and the *North American* passed into strange hands.

And after a while of years, when Boston asserted so strenuously that all her writers of genius were dead, the Mississippi valley came to believe it, and the Indiana school arose. New York was, of course, delighted—and indeed most of our New England writers were living there. The hierarchy had prevailed, but all too well. Indeed, it had been Channing, Holmes, that Boston really liked. It had swallowed Emerson with a gasp, hardly sooner than the world did; but it never swallowed Whitman,

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nor even Poe; while even its own sons, Hawthorne and Melville, had to go and grow in Berkshire County, which was almost in New York.

Thus the youngsters of the seventies were told that there was no health in them; that Boston's classic age was gone; and Aldrich and Howells were perhaps none too loath to believe it, and that they were the only successors. They never really liked Boston. Lowell remarked once that Howells always wrote "as if some swell had failed to bow to him on Beacon Street." Yet the *aliquid alienum* was highly thought of by Beacon Street. Any one who came from outside the city could get like attention —Cable of New Orleans, Page of Virginia, Davis of Pennsylvania, and Craddock of North Carolina. Most Boston young men left the trade of writing. But they (the *Atlantic* world) were more tolerant of women. Louise Chandler Moulton reigned in the halls where Emerson and Margaret Fuller had sat —and the best Boston writers now were women—Sara Jewett, Elizabeth Phelps, Margaret Deland, Alice Brown. Even our press passed into strange hands—first, the solid periodicals I have mentioned; then the "respectable daily" *Advertiser;* the *Youth's Companion;* finally, even the *Evening Transcript*—of which the expected evening delivery, down Marlboro Street, moved Amy Lowell to write a poem—had been to North Carolina for its editor.

But if the world wishes to give a dog a bad name, it can hang him; so most of Boston's young writers went back to law, or politics, or bank-clerking. None of them, I think, ever had got an article into the *Atlantic,* still less the *Review.* Jack Wheelwright and I—who had just scandalized Harvard College and the Abbott family by a skit called "Rollo in Cambridge"—gave over the *Lampoon* to New York, and under John Mitchell and Dan Martin founded *Life;* and many of us went to New York publishers. It was years after the *Century, Harper's, Scribner's, Appleton's,* and *Lippincott's* had received us—that any one of us got a serial into the *Atlantic.* Yet the vitality of Boston is shown in new eruptions of genius—for instance, the Christian Science movement and free verse. The fact that one personally may not follow either makes it all the safer to assert that no community which can originate movements of such importance, so widely spread throughout the world, and having so much (moral or æsthetic) value in them, can be deemed spiritually or intellectually dead. And Mrs. Eddy at her death had a hundred times more followers throughout the world than had Christ a lifetime after his crucifixion.

Natheless, we must conclude, on the whole, that as the port of Boston is dead, so are its poets and writers—save, of course, the historians or scientists, where Rhodes has replaced Prescott and Motley—but even Rhodes was a Clevelander. And other outlanders controlled all Boston; heading its university, its principal pulpits, everything from the baseball team to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology—even Harvard College was only saved from a Texas president by a Verdun-like resistance of the *poileux** against the imperialism of an Eliot. And finally, Boston could not even play baseball.

This, by a natural progression, leads to our next cause of Boston's decadence, which is—its undue modesty. It ill becomes a Bostonian to dwell upon this characteristic, which to all but a profound observer might seem not the most obvious among Boston's many virtues. But our last page goes far to prove it.

* *I. e.,* "whiskered ones"—old mustaches.

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It was never believed in Boston that a Boston man could be found who was really competent to conduct great enterprises. President Eliot, at Harvard, was firmly convinced that no good could ever be expected from the youth of Massachusetts first families. It was the "digs" or "grinds"—the boys who came from the back country to work their way through college—who were petted and honored with the personal acquaintance of the faculty. All the scholarships then were eleemosynary, that is, no man who was financially independent was allowed to win one; and this policy widened the breach already too sure to come between the A's and those of the "gentleman's" mark—C. And the fathers, already prepared to put their sons under financial guardianship, were therefore easily convinced that their sons were intellectually incompetent also. Then, after graduation, they encountered old Boston's conviction of young Boston's brainlessness. Thus boys with rich parents were encouraged to be mere wasters, just as Harvard encouraged them to be idlers. If some few broke into business, it was as difficult as now to "break into the movies." Doctors, indeed, they became; but at the bar they encountered the distrust of the business men and the jealousy of those who thought that a Harvard education gave them a pull—instead of (as Henry Adams found it) an actual handicap. And still more so was it in politics; while in literature Barrett Wendell used to swear that the literary decadence of Boston actually dated from its putting its press and its reviews out of Harvard hands. Anyhow, Boston youth was damned: no good could come out of it; and the rest of the U. S. A. (regretfully, to do it justice) had to accept that valuation. What wonder if—being naturally modest—we came also to believe it? Thus the Boston, the Massachusetts, of the eighties was by way of admitting that it had no home talent; and so its best came to be exported. Massachusetts men went to the top in New York, Chicago, London, Washington, the prairies, or the seas—but not in Boston. The fathers cut the coupons on the bonds *their* fathers had bought, and did not believe their sons were any good. And Boston was in danger of becoming like a hill town of New England—where the younger sons, or the adventurous, have for generations gone West, and the town has taken to abandoned farming like as in Eugene O'Neill's play—and might have gone to seed but for the fresh blood and younger hands brought in from Dartmouth and New England's hinterland. Modesty, therefore, lack of self-confidence, was (and is) a fault of Boston in character—just as undue self-consciousness is in manners. The Cabot type—"a semicivilized tribe inhabiting the confines of Boston with customs, but no manners," as the great lexicographer defined them—had at least no manners, and that is all right. "How fortunate"—said the French ambassador of some Eve of Boston's Adamses—"that that young lady has no manners! Because, if she had manners, they would be bad." Only indeed, that Boston's Adamses have no Eve. Eve is not a Boston type, any more than Astarte. But *incedo per ignes*. . . .

For the last of our causes, the growth of the rest of the country, Boston is not to blame. Indeed, it has done most to help it. May it continue! And may Boston learn to understand the Mississippi valley—and it, in turn, come back to its old belief that, after all, the broadest education and the finest tradition of our free republic are to be found in New England!

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The Greene Murder Case

A PHILO VANCE STORY

BY S. S. VAN DINE
Author of "The Benson Murder Case" and "The 'Canary' Murder Case"

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS:—In the old Greene mansion on 53d Street by the East River live Mrs. Tobias Greene, who is a paralytic, and her five grown children—two daughters (Julia and Sibella), two sons (Chester and Rex), and an adopted daughter (Ada). At half past eleven on the night of November 8 Julia and Ada are shot in their bedrooms. Julia is killed instantly, but Ada, though wounded in the back, recovers. The police take up the investigation; and Markham, the District Attorney, is also called into the case. Markham is accompanied by his intimate friend, Philo Vance, a young social aristocrat who has helped him unofficially in other investigations. Three nights after Julia's death Chester is shot through the heart while sitting in his bedroom. There are no suggestive clews, and the case seems to have reached an impasse. At the end of three weeks Ada comes to the District Attorney's office to say that Rex has confided to her that he has important information. Rex is phoned for by Markham; but just as he is about to leave the house he is mysteriously shot down.

XIV

FOOTPRINTS ON THE CARPET

(Tuesday, November 30; noon)

MARKHAM had considerable difficulty in persuading Ada to accompany us. The girl seemed almost in a panic of fright. Moreover, she held herself indirectly responsible for Rex's death. But at last she permitted us to lead her down to the car.

Heath had already telephoned to the Homicide Bureau, and his arrangements for the investigation were complete when we started up Centre Street. At Police Headquarters Snitkin and another Central Office man named Burke were waiting for us, and crowded into the tonneau of Markham's car. We made excellent time to the Greene mansion, arriving there in less than twenty minutes.

A plain-clothes man lounged against the iron railing at the end of the street a few yards beyond the gate of the Greene grounds, and at a sign from Heath came forward at once.

"What about it, Santos?" the Sergeant demanded gruffly. "Who's been in and out of here this morning?"

"What's the big idea?" the man retorted indignantly. "That old bimbo of a butler came out about nine and returned in less than half an hour with a package. Said he'd been to Third Avenue to get some dog-biscuits. The family sawbones drove up at quarter past ten—that's his car across the street." He pointed to Von Blon's Daimler, which was parked diagonally opposite. "He's still inside.—Then, about ten minutes after the doc arrived, this young lady"—he indicated Ada—"came out and walked toward Avenue A, where she hopped a taxi. And that's every man, woman, or child that's passed in or out of these gates since I

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relieved Cameron at eight o'clock this morning."

"And Cameron's report?"

"Nobody all night."

"Well, some one got in some way," growled Heath. "Run along the west wall there and tell Donnelly to come here *pronto*."

Santos disappeared through the gate, and a moment later we could see him hurrying through the side yard toward the garage. In a few minutes Donnelly —the man set to watch the postern gate —came hurrying up.

"Who got in the back way this morning?" barked Heath.

"Nobody, Sergeant. The cook went marketing about ten o'clock, and two regular deliverymen left packages. That's every one who's been through the rear gate since yesterday."

"Is that so!" Heath was viciously sarcastic.

"I'm telling you——"

"Oh, all right, all right." The Sergeant turned to Burke. "You get up on this wall and make the rounds. See if you can find where any one has climbed over.—And you, Snitkin, look over the yard for footprints. When you guys finish, report to me. I'm going inside."

We went up the front walk, which had been swept clean, and Sproot admitted us to the house. His face was as blank as ever, and he took our coats with his usual obsequious formality.

"You'd better go to your room now, Miss Greene," said Markham, placing his hand kindly on Ada's arm. "Lie down, and try to get a little rest. You look tired. I'll be in to see you before I go."

The girl obeyed submissively without a word.

"And you, Sproot," he ordered; "come in the living-room."

The old butler followed us and stood humbly before the centre-table, where Markham seated himself.

"Now, let's hear your story."

Sproot cleared his throat and stared out of the window.

"There's very little to tell, sir. I was in the butler's pantry, polishing the glassware, when I heard the shot——"

"Go back a little farther," interrupted Markham. "I understand you made a trip to Third Avenue at nine this morning."

"Yes, sir. Miss Sibella bought a Pomeranian yesterday, and she asked me to get some dog-biscuits after breakfast."

"Who called at the house this morning?"

"No one, sir—that is, no one but Doctor Von Blon."

"All right. Now tell us everything that happened."

"Nothing happened, sir—nothing unusual, that is—until poor Mr. Rex was shot. Miss Ada went out a few minutes after Doctor Von Blon arrived; and a little past eleven o'clock you telephoned to Mr. Rex. Then shortly afterward you telephoned a second time to Mr. Rex; and I returned to the pantry. I had only been there a few minutes when I heard the shot——"

"What time would you say that was?"

"About twenty minutes after eleven, sir."

"Then what?"

"I dried my hands on my apron and stepped into the dining-room to listen. I was not quite sure that the shot had been fired inside the house, but I thought I'd better investigate. So I went up-stairs and, as Mr. Rex's door was open, I looked in his room first. There I saw the poor young man lying on the floor with the blood running from a

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small wound in his forehead. I called Doctor Von Blon——"

"Where was the doctor?" Vance put the question.

Sproot hesitated, and appeared to think.

"He was up-stairs, sir; and he came at once——"

"Oh — up-stairs! Roaming about vaguely, I presume—a little here, a little there, what?" Vance's eyes bored into the butler. "Come, come, Sproot. Where was the doctor?"

"I think, sir, he was in Miss Sibella's room."

"*Cogito, cogito.* . . . Well, drum your encephalon a bit and try to reach a conclusion. From what sector of space did the corporeal body of Doctor Von Blon emerge after you had called him?"

"The fact is, sir, he came out of Miss Sibella's door."

"Well, well. Fancy that! And, such being the case, one might conclude—without too great a curfuffling of one's brains — that, preceding his issuing from that particular door, he was actually in Miss Sibella's room?"

"I suppose so, sir."

"Dash it all, Sproot! You know deuced well he was there."

"Well—yes, sir."

"And now suppose you continue with your odyssey."

"It was more like the *Iliad*, if I may say so. More tragic-like, if you understand what I mean; although Mr. Rex was not exactly a Hector. However that may be, sir, Doctor Von Blon came immediately——"

"He had not heard the shot, then?"

"Apparently not, for he seemed very much startled when he saw Mr. Rex. And Miss Sibella, who followed him into Mr. Rex's room, was startled, too."

"Did they make any comment?"

"As to that I couldn't say. I came down-stairs at once and telephoned to Mr. Markham."

As he spoke Ada appeared at the archway, her eyes wide.

"Some one's been in my room," she announced, in a frightened voice. "The French doors to the balcony were partly open when I went up-stairs just now, and there were dirty snow-tracks across the floor. . . . Oh, what does it mean? Do you think——?"

Markham had jerked himself forward.

"You left the French doors shut when you went out?"

"Yes—of course," she answered. "I rarely open them in winter."

"And were they locked?"

"I'm not sure, but I think so. They must have been locked—though how could any one have got in unless I'd forgotten to turn the key?"

Heath had risen and stood listening to the girl's story with grim bewilderment.

"Probably the bird with those galoshes again," he mumbled. "I'll get Jerym himself up here this time."

Markham nodded and turned back to Ada.

"Thank you for telling us, Miss Greene. Suppose you go to some other room and wait for us. We want your room left just as you found it until we've had time to examine it."

"I'll go to the kitchen and stay with cook. I—I don't want to be alone." And with a catch of her breath she left us.

"Where's Doctor Von Blon now?" Markham asked Sproot.

"With Mrs. Greene, sir."

"Tell him we're here and would like to see him at once."

The butler bowed and went out.

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Vance was pacing up and down, his eyes almost closed.

"It grows madder every minute," he said. "It was insane enough without those foot-tracks and that open door. There's something devilish going on here, Markham. There's demonology and witchcraft afoot, or something strangely close to it. I say, is there anything in the Pandects or the Justinian Code relating to the proper legal procedure against diabolic possession or spiritism?"

Before Markham could rebuke him Von Blon entered. His usual suavity had disappeared. He bowed jerkily without speaking, and smoothed his mustache nervously with an unsteady hand.

"Sproot tells me, doctor," said Markham, "that you did not hear the shot fired in Rex's room."

"No!" The fact seemed both to puzzle and disturb him. "I can't make it out either, for Rex's door into the hall was open."

"You were in Miss Sibella's room, were you not?" Vance had halted, and stood studying the doctor.

Von Blon lifted his eyebrows.

"I was. Sibella had been complaining about——"

"A sore throat or something of the kind, no doubt," finished Vance. "But that's immaterial. The fact is that neither you nor Miss Sibella heard the shot. Is that correct?"

The doctor inclined his head. "I knew nothing of it till Sproot knocked on the door and beckoned me across the hall."

"And Miss Sibella accompanied you into Rex's room?"

"She came in just behind me, I believe. But I told her not to touch anything, and sent her immediately back to her room. When I came out into the hall again I heard Sproot phoning the District Attorney's office, and thought I'd better wait till the police arrived. After talking over the situation with Sibella I informed Mrs. Greene of the tragedy, and remained with her until Sproot told me of your arrival."

"You saw no one else up-stairs, or heard no suspicious noise?"

"No one—nothing. The house, in fact, was unusually quiet."

"Do you recall if Miss Ada's door was open?"

The doctor pondered a moment. "I don't recall—which means it was probably closed. Otherwise I would have noticed it."

"And how is Mrs. Greene this morning?" Vance's question, put negligently, sounded curiously irrelevant.

Von Blon gave a start.

"She seemed somewhat more comfortable when I first saw her, but the news of Rex's death disturbed her considerably. When I left her just now she was complaining about the shooting pains in her spine."

Markham had got up and now moved restlessly toward the archway.

"The Medical Examiner will be here any minute," he said; "and I want to look over Rex's room before he arrives. You might come with us, doctor.—And you, Sproot, had better remain at the front door."

We went up-stairs quietly: I think it was in all our minds that we should not advertise our presence to Mrs. Greene. Rex's room, like all those in the Greene mansion, was spacious. It had a large window at the front and another at the side. There were no draperies to shut out the light, and the slanting midday sun of winter poured in. The walls, as Chester had once told us, were lined

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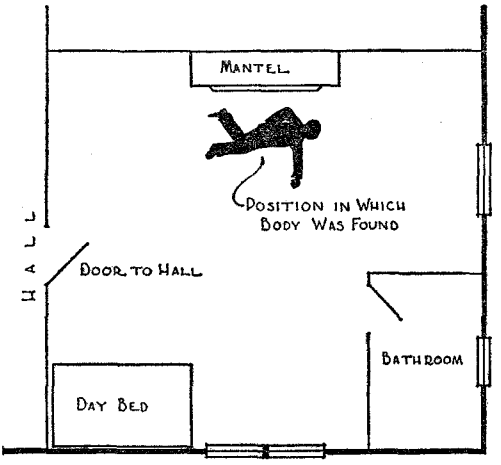
with books; and pamphlets and papers were piled in every available nook. The chamber resembled a student's workshop more than a bedroom.

In front of the Tudor fireplace in the centre of the left wall—a duplication of the fireplace in Ada's room—sprawled the body of Rex Greene. His left arm was extended, but his right arm was crooked, and the fingers were tightened, as if holding some object. His domelike head was turned a little to one side; and a thin stream of blood



Rex's Bedroom.

ran down his temple to the floor from a tiny aperture over the right eye.

Heath studied the body for several minutes.

"He was shot standing still, Mr. Markham. He collapsed in a heap and then straightened out a little after he'd hit the floor."

Vance was bending over the dead man with a puzzled expression.

"Markham, there's something curious and inconsistent here," he said. "It was broad daylight when this thing happened, and the lad was shot from the front—there are even powder marks on the face. But his expression is perfectly natural. No sign of fear or astonishment—rather peaceful and unconcerned, in fact. . . . It's incredible. The murderer and the pistol certainly weren't invisible."

Heath nodded slowly.

"I noticed that too, sir. It's damn peculiar." He bent more closely over the body. "That wound looks to me like a thirty-two," he commented, turning to the doctor for confirmation.

"Yes," said Von Blon. "It appears to have been made with the same weapon that was used against the others."

"It was the same weapon," Vance pronounced sombrely, taking out his cigarette-case with thoughtful deliberation. "And it was the same killer who used it." He smoked a moment, his troubled gaze resting on Rex's face. "But why was it done at just this time—in the daylight, with the door open, and when there were people close at hand? Why didn't the murderer wait until night? Why did he run such a needless risk?"

"Don't forget," Markham reminded him, "that Rex was on the point of coming to my office to tell me something."

"But who knew he was about to indulge in revelations? He was shot within ten minutes of your call——" He broke off and turned quickly to the doctor. "What telephone extensions are there in the house?"

"There are three, I believe." Von Blon spoke easily. "There's one in Mrs. Greene's room, one in Sibella's room, and, I think, one in the kitchen. The main phone is, of course, in the lower front hall."

"A regular central office," growled Heath. "Almost anybody coulda listened in." Suddenly he fell on his knees beside the body and unflexed the fingers of the right hand.

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"I'm afraid you won't find that cryptic drawing, Sergeant," murmured Vance. "If the murderer shot Rex in order to seal his mouth the paper will surely be gone. Any one overhearing the phone calls, d'ye see, would have learned of the envelope he was to fetch along."

"I guess you're right, sir. But I'm going to have a look."

He felt under the body and then systematically went through the dead man's pockets. But he found nothing even resembling the blue envelope mentioned by Ada. At last he rose to his feet.

"It's gone, all right."

Then another idea occurred to him. Going hurriedly into the hall, he called down the stairs to Sproot. When the butler appeared Heath swung on him savagely.

"Where's the private mail-box?"

"I don't know that I exactly understand you." Sproot's answer was placid and unruffled. "There is a mail-box just outside the front door. Do you refer to that, sir?"

"No! You know damn well I don't. I want to know where the private—get me?—*private* mail-box is, *in the house*."

"Perhaps you are alluding to the little silver pyx for outgoing mail on the table in the lower hall."

"'Pyx,' is it!" The Sergeant's sarcasm was stupendous. "Well, go down and bring me everything that's in this here pyx.—No! Wait a minute—I'll keep you company. . . . *Pyx*!" He took Sproot by the arm and fairly dragged him from the room.

A few moments later he returned, crestfallen.

"Empty!" was his laconic announcement.

"But don't give up hope entirely just because your cabalistic diagram has disappeared," Vance exhorted him. "I doubt if it would have helped you much. This case isn't a rebus. It's a complex mathematical formula, filled with moduli, infinitesimals, quantics, faciends, derivatives, and coefficients. Rex himself might have solved it if he hadn't been shoved off the earth so soon." His eyes wandered over the room. "And I'm not at all sure he hadn't solved it."

Markham was growing impatient.

"We'd better go down to the drawing-room and wait for Doctor Doremus and the men from Headquarters," he suggested. "We can't learn anything here."

We went out into the hall, and as we passed Ada's door Heath threw it open and stood on the threshold surveying the room. The French doors leading to the balcony were slightly ajar, and the wind from the west was flapping their green chintz curtains. On the light beige rug were several damp discolored tracks leading round the foot of the bed to the hall-door where we stood. Heath studied the marks for a moment, and then drew the door shut again.

"They're footprints, all right," he remarked. "Some one tracked in the dirty snow from the balcony and forgot to shut the glass doors."

We were scarcely seated in the drawing-room when there came a knocking on the front door; and Sproot admitted Snitkin and Burke.

"You first, Burke," ordered the Sergeant, as the two officers appeared. "Any signs of an entry over the wall?"

"Not a one." The man's overcoat and trousers were smudged from top to

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bottom. "I crawled all round the top of the wall, and I'm here to tell you that nobody left any traces anywheres. If any guy got over that wall, he vaulted."

"Fair enough.—And now you, Snitkin."

"*I* got news for you." The detective spoke with overt triumph. "Somebody's walked up those outside steps to the stone balcony on the west side of the house. And he walked up 'em this morning after the snowfall at nine o'clock, for the tracks are fresh. Furthermore, they're the same size as the ones we found last time on the front walk."

"Where do these new tracks come from?" Heath leaned forward eagerly.

"That's the hell of it, Sergeant. They come from the front walk right below the steps to the front door; and there's no tracing 'em farther back because the front walk's been swept clean."

"I mighta known it," grumbled Heath. "And the tracks are only going one way?"

"That's all. They leave the walk a few feet below the front door, swing round the corner of the house, and go up the steps to the balcony. The guy who made 'em didn't come down that way."

The Sergeant puffed disappointedly on his cigar.

"So he went up the balcony steps, entered the French doors, crossed Ada's room to the hall, did his dirty work, and then—disappeared! A sweet case this is!" He clicked his tongue with disgust.

"The man may have gone out by the front door," suggested Markham.

The Sergeant made a wry face and bellowed for Sproot, who entered immediately.

"Say, which way did you go upstairs when you heard the shot?"

"I went up the servants' stairs, sir."

"Then some one mighta gone down the front stairs at the same time without your seeing him?"

"Yes, sir; it's quite possible."

"That's all."

Sproot bowed and again took up his post at the front door.

"Well, it looks like that's what happened, sir," Heath commented to Markham. "Only how did he get in and out of the grounds without being seen? That's what I want to know."

Vance was standing by the window gazing out upon the river.

"There's something dashed unconvincing about those recurrent spoors in the snow. Our eccentric culprit is altogether too careless with his feet and too careful with his hands. He doesn't leave a finger-print or any other sign of his presence except those foot-tracks—all nice and tidy and staring us in the face. But they don't square with the rest of this fantastic business."

Heath stared hopelessly at the floor. He was patently of Vance's opinion; but the dogged thoroughness of his nature asserted itself, and presently he looked up with a forced show of energy.

"Go and phone Captain Jerym, Snitkin, and tell him I wish he'd hustle out here to look at some carpet-tracks. Then make measurements of those footprints on the balcony steps.—And you, Burke, take up a post in the upper hall, and don't let any one go into the two front west rooms."

XV

THE MURDERER IN THE HOUSE

(Tuesday, November 30; 12.30 p. m.)

When Snitkin and Burke had gone Vance turned from the window and strolled to where the doctor was sitting.

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"I think it might be well," he said quietly, "if the exact whereabouts of every one in the house preceding and during the shooting was determined. —We know, doctor, that you arrived here at about quarter past ten. How long were you with Mrs. Greene?"

Von Blon drew himself up and gave Vance a resentful stare. But quickly his manner changed and he answered courteously:

"I sat with her for perhaps half an hour; then I went to Sibella's room—a little before eleven, I should say—and remained there until Sproot called me."

"And was Miss Sibella with you in the room all the time?"

"Yes—the entire time."

"Thank you."

Vance returned to the window, and Heath, who had been watching the doctor belligerently, took his cigar from his mouth and cocked his head at Markham.

"You know, sir, I was just thinking over the Inspector's suggestion about planting some one in the house to keep an eye on things. How would it be if we got rid of this nurse that's here now, and put in one of our own women from Headquarters?"

Von Blon looked up with eager approval.

"An excellent plan!" he exclaimed.

"Very well, Sergeant," agreed Markham. "You attend to it."

"Your woman can begin to-night," Von Blon told Heath. "I'll meet you here whenever you say, and give her instructions. There's nothing very technical for her to do."

Heath made a notation in a battered note-book.

"I'll meet you here, say, at six o'clock. How's that?"

"That will suit me perfectly." Von Blon rose. "And now, if I can be of no more service . . ."

"That's quite all right, doctor," said Markham. "Go right ahead."

But instead of immediately leaving the house Von Blon went up-stairs, and we heard him knock on Sibella's door. A few minutes later he came down again and passed on to the front door without a glance in our direction.

In the meantime Snitkin had come in and informed the Sergeant that Captain Jerym was leaving Police Headquarters at once and would arrive within half an hour. He had then gone outside to make his measurements of the footprints on the balcony steps.

"And now," suggested Markham, "I think we might see Mrs. Greene. It's possible she heard something. . . ."

Vance roused himself from apparent lethargy.

"By all means. But first let us get a few facts in hand. I long to hear where the nurse was during the half-hour preceding Rex's demise. And I could bear to know if the old lady was alone immediately following the firing of the revolver.—Why not have our Miss Nightingale on the tapis before we brave the invalid's imprecations?"

Markham concurred, and Heath sent Sproot to summon her.

The nurse came in with an air of professional detachment; but her roseate cheeks had paled perceptibly since we last saw her.

"Miss Craven" — Vance's manner was easy and businesslike—"will you please tell us exactly what you were doing between half past ten and half past eleven this morning?"

"I was in my room on the third floor," she answered. "I went there when the doctor arrived a little after ten, and remained until he called me to

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bring Mrs. Greene's bouillon. Then I returned to my room and stayed until the doctor again summoned me to sit with Mrs. Greene while he was with you gentlemen."

"When you were in your room, was the door open?"

"Oh, yes. I always leave it open in the daytime in case Mrs. Greene calls."

"And her door was open too, I take it."

"Yes."

"Did you hear the shot?"

"No, I didn't."

"That will be all, Miss Craven." Vance accompanied her to the hall. You'd better return to your room now, for we're going to pay a visit to your patient."

Mrs. Greene eyed us vindictively when we entered after having knocked and been imperiously ordered to come in.

"More trouble," she complained. "Am I never to have any peace in my own house? The first day in weeks I've felt even moderately comfortable—and then all this had to happen to upset me!"

"We regret, madam—more than you do apparently—that your son is dead," said Markham. "And we are sorry for the annoyance the tragedy is causing you. But that does not relieve me from the necessity of investigating the affair. As you were awake at the time the shot was fired, it is essential that we seek what information you may be able to give us."

"What information can I give you—a helpless paralytic, lying here alone?" A smouldering anger flickered in her eyes. "It strikes me that you are the one to give *me* information."

Markham ignored her barbed retort.

"The nurse tells me your door was open this morning. . . ."

"And why shouldn't it have been? Am I expected to be entirely excommunicated from the rest of the household?"

"Certainly not. I was merely trying to find out if, by any chance, you were in a position to hear anything that went on in the hall."

"Well, I heard nothing—if that's all you want to know."

Markham persisted patiently.

"You heard no one, for instance, cross Miss Ada's room, or open Miss Ada's door?"

"I've already told you I heard nothing." The old lady's denial was viciously emphatic.

"Nor any one walking in the hall, or descending the stairs?"

"No one but that incompetent doctor and the impossible Sproot. Were we supposed to have had visitors this morning?"

"Some one shot your son," Markham reminded her coolly.

"It was probably his own fault," she snapped. Then she seemed to relent a bit. "Still, Rex was not as hard and thoughtless as the rest of the children. But even he neglected me shamefully." She appeared to weigh the matter. "Yes," she decided, "he received just punishment for the way he treated me."

Markham struggled with a hot resentment. At last he managed to ask, with apparent calmness:

"Did you hear the shot with which your son was punished?"

"I did not." Her tone was again irate. "I knew nothing of the disturbance until the doctor saw fit to tell me."

"And yet Mr. Rex's door, as well as yours, was open," said Markham. "I

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can hardly understand your not having heard the shot."

The old lady gave him a look of scathing irony.

"Am I to sympathize with your lack of understanding?"

"Lest you be tempted to, madam, I shall leave you." Markham bowed stiffly and turned on his heel.

As we reached the lower hall Doctor Doremus arrived.

"Your friends are still at it, I hear, Sergeant," he greeted Heath, with his usual breezy manner. Handing his coat and hat to Sproot, he came forward and shook hands with all of us. "When you fellows don't spoil my breakfast you interfere with my lunch," he repined. "Where's the body?"

Heath led him up-stairs, and after a few minutes returned to the drawing-room. Taking out another cigar he bit the end of it savagely. "Well, sir, I guess you'll want to see this Miss Sibella next, won't you?"

"We might as well," sighed Markham. "Then I'll tackle the servants and leave things to you. The reporters will be along pretty soon."

"Don't I know it! And what they're going to do to us in the papers'll be aplenty!"

"And you can't even tell them 'it is confidently expected that an arrest will be made in the immediate future,' don't y' know," grinned Vance. "It's most distressin'."

Heath made an inarticulate noise of exasperation and, calling Sproot, sent him for Sibella.

A moment later she came in carrying a small Pomeranian. She was paler than I had ever seen her, and there was unmistakable fright in her eyes. When she greeted us it was without her habitual gaiety.

"This thing is getting rather ghastly, isn't it?" she remarked when she had taken a seat.

"It is indeed dreadful," returned Markham soberly. "You have our very deepest sympathy. . . ."

"Oh, thanks awf'ly." She accepted the cigarette Vance offered her. "But I'm beginning to wonder how long I'll be here to receive condolences." She spoke with forced lightness, but a strained quality in her voice told of her suppressed emotion.

Markham regarded her sympathetically.

"I do not think it would be a bad idea if you went away for a while—to some friend's house, let us say—preferably out of the city."

"Oh, no." She tossed her head with defiance. "I sha'n't run away. If there's any one really bent on killing me, he'll manage it somehow, wherever I am. Anyway, I'd have to come back sooner or later. I couldn't board with out-of-town friends indefinitely—could I?" She looked at Markham with a kind of anxious despair. "You haven't any idea, I suppose, who it is that's obsessed with the idea of exterminating us Greenes?"

Markham was reluctant to admit to her the utter hopelessness of the official outlook; and she turned appealingly to Vance.

"You needn't treat me like a child," she said spiritedly. "You, at least, Mr. Vance, can tell me if there is any one under suspicion."

"No, dash it all, Miss Greene!—there isn't," he answered promptly. "It's an amazin' confession to have to make; but it's true. That's why, I think, Mr. Markham suggested that you go away for a while."

"It's very thoughtful of him and all

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that," she returned. "But I think I'll stay and see it through."

"You're a very brave girl," said Markham, with troubled admiration. "And I assure you everything humanly possible will be done to safeguard you."

"Well, so much for that." She tossed her cigarette into a receiver, and began abstractedly to pet the dog in her lap. "And now, I suppose, you want to know if I heard the shot. Well, I didn't. So you may continue the inquisition from that point."

"You were in your room, though, at the time of your brother's death?"

"I was in my room all morning," she said. "My first appearance beyond the threshold was when Sproot brought the sad tidings of Rex's passing. But Doctor Von shooed me back again; and there I've remained until now. Model behavior, don't you think, for a member of this new and wicked generation?"

"What time did Doctor Von Blon come to your room?" asked Vance.

Sibella gave him a faint whimsical smile.

"I'm so glad it was you who asked that question. I'm sure Mr. Markham would have used a disapproving tone—though it's quite *au fait* to receive one's doctor in one's boudoir.—Let me see. I'm sure you asked Doctor Von the same question, so I must be careful. . . . A little before eleven, I should say."

"The doc's exact words," chimed in Heath suspiciously.

Sibella turned a look of amused surprise upon him.

"Isn't that wonderful! But then, I've always been told that honesty is the best policy."

"And did Doctor Von Blon remain in your room until called by Sproot?" pursued Vance.

"Oh, yes. He was smoking his pipe. Mother detests pipes, and he often sneaks into my room to enjoy a quiet smoke."

"And what were you doing during the doctor's visit?"

"I was bathing this ferocious animal." She held up the Pomeranian for Vance's inspection. "Doesn't he look nice?"

"In the bathroom?"

"Naturally. I'd hardly bathe him in the *poudrière*."

"And was the bathroom door closed?"

"As to that I couldn't say. But it's quite likely. Doctor Von is like a member of the family, and I'm terribly rude to him sometimes."

Vance got up.

"Thank you very much, Miss Greene. We're sorry we had to trouble you. Do you mind remaining in your room for a while?"

"Mind? On the contrary. It's about the only place I feel safe." She walked to the archway. "If you do find out anything you'll let me know—won't you? There's no use pretending any longer. I'm dreadfully scared." Then, as if ashamed of her admission, she went quickly down the hall.

Just then Sproot admitted the two finger-print experts—Dubois and Bellamy—and the official photographer. Heath joined them in the hall and took them up-stairs, returning immediately.

"And now what, sir?"

Markham seemed lost in gloomy speculation, and it was Vance who answered the Sergeant's query.

"I rather think," he said, "that another verbal bout with the pious Hemming and the taciturn Frau Mannheim might dispose of a loose end or two."

Hemming was sent for. She came in laboring under intense excitement. Her

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eyes fairly glittered with the triumph of the prophetess whose auguries have come to pass. But she had no information whatever to impart. She had spent most of the forenoon in the laundry, and had been unaware of the tragedy until Sproot had mentioned it to her shortly before our arrival. She was voluble, however, on the subject of divine punishment, and it was with difficulty that Vance stemmed her oracular stream of words.

Nor could the cook throw any light on Rex's murder. She had been in the kitchen, she said, the entire morning except for the hour she had gone marketing. She had not heard the shot and, like Hemming, knew of the tragedy only through Sproot. A marked change, however, had come over the woman. When she had entered the drawing-room fright and resentment animated her usually stolid features, and as she sat before us her fingers worked nervously in her lap.

Vance watched her critically during the interview. At the end he asked suddenly:

"Miss Ada has been with you in the kitchen this past half-hour?"

At the mention of Ada's name her fear was perceptibly intensified. She drew a deep breath.

"Yes, little Ada has been with me. And thank the good God she was away this morning when Mr. Rex was killed, or it might have been her and not Mr. Rex. They tried once to shoot her, and maybe they'll try again. She oughtn't to be allowed to stay in this house."

"I think it only fair to tell you, Frau Mannheim," said Vance, "that some one will be watching closely over Miss Ada from now on."

The woman looked at him gratefully.

"Why should any one want to harm little Ada?" she asked, in an anguished tone. "I also shall watch over her."

When she had left us Vance said:

"Something tells me, Markham, that Ada could have no better protector in this house than that motherly German. —And yet," he added, "there'll be no end of this grim carnage until we have the murderer safely gyved." His face darkened: his mouth was as cruel as Pietro de' Medici's. "This hellish business isn't ended. The final picture is only just emerging. And it's damnable —worse than any of the horrors of Rops or Doré."

Markham nodded with dismal depression.

"Yes, there appears to be an inevitability about these tragedies that's beyond mere human power to combat." He got up wearily and addressed himself to Heath. "There's nothing more I can do here at present, Sergeant. Carry on, and phone me at the office before five."

We were about to take our departure when Captain Jerym arrived. He was a quiet, heavy-set man, with a gray, scraggly mustache and small, deep-set eyes. One might easily have mistaken him for a shrewd, efficient merchant. After a brief hand-shaking ceremony Heath piloted him up-stairs.

Vance had already donned his ulster, but now he removed it.

"I think I'll tarry a bit and hear what the Captain has to say regarding those footprints. Y' know, Markham, I've been evolving a rather fantastic theory about 'em; and I want to test it."

Markham looked at him a moment with questioning curiosity. Then he glanced at his watch.

"I'll wait with you," he said.

Ten minutes later Doctor Doremus

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came down, and paused long enough on his way out to tell us that Rex had been shot with a .32 revolver held at a distance of about a foot from the forehead, the bullet having entered directly from the front and embedded itself, in all probability, in the midbrain.

A quarter of an hour after Doremus had gone Heath re-entered the drawing-room. He expressed uneasy surprise at seeing us still there.

"Mr. Vance wanted to hear Jerym's report," Markham explained.

"The Captain'll be through any minute now." The Sergeant sank into a chair. "He's checking Snitkin's measurements. He couldn't make much of the tracks on the carpet, though."

"And finger-prints?" asked Markham.

"Nothing yet."

"And there won't be," added Vance. "There wouldn't be footprints if they weren't deliberately intended for us."

Heath shot him a sharp look, but before he could speak Captain Jerym and Snitkin came down-stairs.

"What's the verdict, Cap?" asked the Sergeant.

"Those footprints on the balcony steps," said Jerym, "were made with galoshes of the same size and markings as the pattern turned over to me by Snitkin a fortnight or so ago. As for the prints in the room, I'm not so sure. They appear to be the same, however; and the dirt on them is sooty, like the dirt on the snow outside the French doors. I've several photographs of them; and I'll know definitely when I get my enlargements under the microscope."

Vance rose and sauntered to the archway.

"May I have your permission to go up-stairs a moment, Sergeant?"

Heath looked mystified. His instinct was to ask a reason for this unexpected request, but all he said was: "Sure. Go ahead."

Something in Vance's manner—an air of satisfaction combined with a suppressed eagerness—told me that he had verified his theory.

He was gone less than five minutes. When he returned he carried a pair of galoshes similar to those that had been found in Chester's closet. He handed them to Captain Jerym.

"You'll probably find that these made the tracks."

Both Jerym and Snitkin examined them carefully, comparing the measurements and fitting the rough patterns to the soles. Finally, the Captain took one of them to the window, and affixing a jeweller's glass to his eye, studied the riser of the heel.

"I think you're right," he agreed. "There's a worn place here which corresponds to an indentation on the cast I made."

Heath had sprung to his feet and stood eying Vance.

"Where did you find 'em?" he demanded.

"Tucked away in the rear of the little linen-closet at the head of the stairs."

The Sergeant's excitement got the better of him. He swung about to Markham, fairly spluttering with consternation.

"Those two guys from the Bureau that went over this house looking for the gun told me there wasn't a pair of galoshes in the place; and I specially told 'em to keep their eyes peeled for galoshes. And now Mr. Vance finds 'em in the linen-closet off the main hall up-stairs!"

"But, Sergeant," said Vance mildly, "the galoshes weren't there when your sleuths were looking for the revolver.

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On both former occasions the johnny who wore 'em had plenty of time to put 'em away safely. But to-day, d' ye see, he had no chance to sequester them; so he left 'em in the linen-closet for the time being."

"Oh, that's it, is it?" Heath growled vaguely. "Well, what's the rest of the story, Mr. Vance?"

"That's all there is to date. If I knew the rest I'd know who fired the shots. But I might remind you that neither of your *sergents-de-ville* saw any suspicious person leave here."

"Good God, Vance!" Markham was on his feet. "That means that the murderer is in the house this minute."

"At any rate," returned Vance lazily, "I think we are justified in assuming that the murderer was here when we arrived."

"But nobody's left the place but Von Blon," blurted Heath.

Vance nodded. "Oh, it's wholly possible the murderer is still in the house, Sergeant."

XVI

THE LOST POISONS

(Tuesday, November 30; 2 p. m.)

Markham and Vance and I had a late lunch at the Stuyvesant Club. During the meal the subject of the murder was avoided as if by tacit agreement; but when we sat smoking over our coffee Markham settled back in his chair and surveyed Vance sternly.

"Now," he said, "I want to hear how you came to find those galoshes in the linen-closet. And, damn it! I don't want any garrulous evasions or quotations out of Bartlett."

"I'm quite willing to unburden my soul," smiled Vance. "It was all so dashed simple. I never put any stock in the burglar theory, and so was able to approach the problem with a virgin mind, as it were."

He lit a fresh cigarette and poured himself another cup of coffee.

"Perpend, Markham. On the night that Julia and Ada were shot a double set of footprints was found. It had stopped snowing at about eleven o'clock, and the tracks had been made between that hour and midnight, when the Sergeant arrived on the scene. On the night of Chester's murder there was another set of footprints similar to the others; and they too had been made shortly after the weather had cleared. Here, then, were tracks in the snow, approaching and retreating from the front door, preceding each crime; and both sets had been made after the snow had stopped falling, *when they would be distinctly visible and determinable.* This was not a particularly striking coincidence, but it was sufficiently arresting to create a slight strain on my *cortex cerebri.* And the strain increased perceptibly this morning when Snitkin reported his discovery of fresh footprints on the balcony steps; for once again the same meteorological conditions had accompanied our culprit's passion for leaving spoors. I was therefore driven to the irresistible inference, as you learned Solons put it, that the murderer, so careful and calculating about everything else, had deliberately made all these footprints for our special edification. In each instance, d' ye see, he had chosen the only hour of the day when his tracks would not be obliterated by falling snow or confused with other tracks. . . . Are you there?"

"Go ahead," said Markham. "I'm listening."

"To proceed, then. Another coincidence attached to these three sets of footprints. It was impossible, because of

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the dry, flaky nature of the snow, to determine whether the first set had originated in the house and returned there, or had first approached the house from the street and then retreated. Again, on the night of Chester's demise, when the snow was damp and susceptible to clear impressions, the same doubt arose. The tracks to and from the house were on opposite sides of the front walk: not a single footstep overlapped! Accidental? Perhaps. But not wholly reasonable. A person walking to and from a door along a comparatively narrow pathway would almost certainly have doubled on some of his tracks. And even if he had failed to superimpose any of his footprints, the parallel spoors would have been close together. But these two lines of prints were far apart: each clung to the extreme edge of the walk, as if the person who made them was positively afraid of overlapping. Now, consider the footprints made this morning. There was a single line of them entering the house, but none coming out. We concluded that the murderer had made his escape via the front door and down the neatly swept walk; but this, after all, was only an assumption."

Vance sipped his coffee and inhaled a moment on his cigarette.

"The point I'm trying to bring out is this: there is no proof whatever that all these footprints were not made by some one in the house who first went out and then returned for the express purpose of leading the police to believe that an outsider was guilty. And, on the other hand, there is evidence that the footprints actually did originate in the house; because if an outsider had made them he would have been at no pains to confuse the issue of their origin, since, in any event, they could not have been traced back farther than the street. Therefore, as a tentative starting-point, I assumed that the tracks had, in reality, been made by some one in the house.—I can't say, of course, whether or not my layman's logic adds lustre to the gladsome light of jurisprudence——"

"Your reasoning is consistent as far as it goes," cut in Markham tartly. "But it is hardly complete enough to have led you directly to the linen-closet this morning."

"True. But there were various contribut'ry factors. For instance, the galoshes which Snitkin found in Chester's clothes-closet were the exact size of the prints. At first I toyed with the idea that they were the actual instruments of our unknown's vestigial deception. But when, after they had been taken to Headquarters, another set of similar tracks appeared—to wit, the ones found this morning—I amended my theory slightly, and concluded that Chester had owned two pairs of galoshes—one that had perhaps been discarded but not thrown away. That was why I wanted to wait for Captain Jerym's report: I was anxious to learn if the new tracks were exactly like the old ones."

"But even so," interrupted Markham, "your theory that the footprints emanated from the house strikes me as being erected on pretty weak scaffolding. Were there any other indicants?"

"I was coming to them," replied Vance reproachfully. "But you *will* rush me so. Pretend that I'm a lawyer, and my summation will sound positively breathless."

"I'm more likely to pretend that I'm a presiding judge, and give you *sus. per coll.*"

"Ah, well." Vance sighed and continued. "Let us consider the hypothetical intruder's means of escape after the

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shooting of Julia and Ada. Sproot came into the upper hall immediately after the shot had been fired in Ada's room; yet he heard nothing—neither footsteps in the hall nor the front door closing. And, Markham old thing, a person in galoshes going down marble steps in the dark is no midsummer zephyr for silence. In the circumstances Sproot would have been certain to hear him making his escape. Therefore, the explanation that suggested itself to me was that *he did not make his escape.*"

"And the footprints outside?"

"Were made beforehand by some one walking to the front gate and back. —And that brings me to the night of Chester's murder. You remember Rex's tale of hearing a dragging noise in the hall and a door closing about fifteen minutes before the shot was fired, and Ada's corroboration of the door-shutting part of the story? The noise, please note, was heard after it had stopped snowing—in fact, after the moon had come out. Could the noise not easily have been a person walking in galoshes, or even taking them off, after having returned from making those separated tracks to and from the gate? And might not that closing door have been the door of the linen-closet where the galoshes were being temporarily cached?"

Markham nodded. "Yes, the sounds Rex and Ada heard might be explained that way."

"And this morning's business was even plainer. There were footprints on the balcony steps, made between nine o'clock and noon. But neither of the guards saw any one enter the grounds. Moreover, Sproot waited a few moments in the dining-room after the shot had been fired in Rex's room; and if any one had come down the stairs and gone out the front door Sproot would certainly have heard him. It's true that the murderer might have descended the front stairs as Sproot went up the servants' stairs. But is that likely? Would he have waited in the upper hall after killing Rex, knowing that some one was likely to step out and discover him? I think not. And anyway, the guards saw no one leave the estate. *Ergo*, I concluded that *no one came down the front stairs after Rex's death.* I assumed again that the footprints had been made at some earlier hour. This time, however, the murderer did not go to the gate and return, for a guard was there who would have seen him; and, furthermore, the front steps and the walk had been swept. So our track-maker, after having donned the galoshes, stepped out of the front door, walked round the corner of the house, mounted the balcony steps, and re-entered the upper hall by way of Ada's room."

"I see." Markham leaned over and knocked the ashes from his cigar. "Therefore, you inferred that the galoshes were still in the house."

"Exactly. But I'll admit I didn't think of the linen-closet at once. First I tried Chester's room. Then I took a look round Julia's chamber; and I was about to go up to the servants' quarters when I recalled Rex's story of the closing door. I ran my eye over all the second-story doors, and straightway tried the linen-closet—which was, after all, the most likely place for a transient occultation. And lo! there were the galoshes tucked under an old drugget. The murderer had probably hidden them there both times before, pending an opportunity of secreting them more thoroughly."

"But where could they have been

(Continued on page 375 of this number.)

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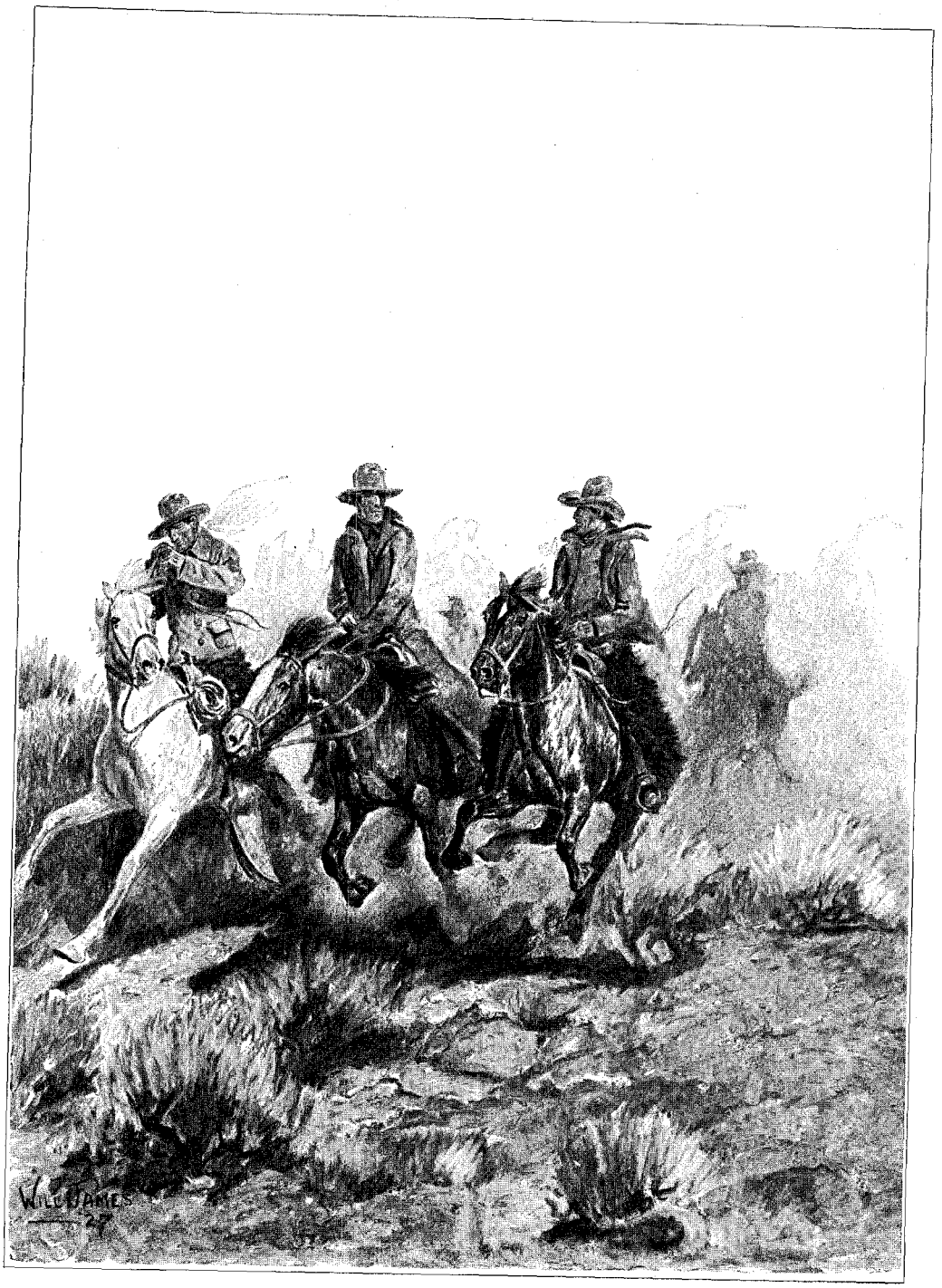

We was riding along at a pretty good gait, figgering on reaching the ranch before it got too dark.

From a drawing by Will James.

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All in the Day's Riding

"ONCE WHEN THE LAUGH WAS ON ME"

BY WILL JAMES

ILLUSTRATIONS BY THE AUTHOR

I FIGGER what makes a narrow escape such is not the danger that's in it so much as what a feller is in fear of most. Now for my part, there's two things that could always make chills run up and down my backbone, one is deep water and the other is height.

There's lots of folks such as them that works on sky scrapers and bridges that can perch themselves on near nothing up a couple of hundred feet in the air and look down to earth away below and feel as safe as any of the humans that's looking up at 'em. Then there's others that can make a fish blush for shame when it comes to swimming in the deep waters and diving from ungodly tall places.

I'm willing to give them kinds of folks all the credit, and sure won't crowd 'em in their liking for either the high places or the deep waters, and even tho the narrow escape I want to tell of here might sound kinda tame to some of 'em, it sure didn't leave no such impression with me.

This one happened in the water, and mighty cold water at that; there was still hunks of ice in it, and me being about as good a swimmer as the granite boulders that was in the bottom of that river is what hindered me considerable in grinning about it when it happened.

Me and a few other riders had just took a couple of thousand head of cattle on the summer range, a three days' drive, and we was coming back after another bunch. We was riding along at a pretty good gait, figgering on reaching the ranch before it got too dark.

A couple of miles or so from the ranch the boys strung out in a high lope and headed for the big bridge, I stayed behind thinking of taking a short cut and beating 'em to the ranch when they'd figgered I was still coming back of 'em. All went fine and the boys left me, remarking they'd see me in time for breakfast, then I turned to the right and headed my horse thru the cottonwoods of the river bottom in a high lope.

I'd crossed the river a few days before and remembered that it near made my horse swim then, and I'd forgot that it'd been raining pretty heavy since and raised the river up quite a few feet. It was a treacherous river to cross at any time on account of the swift under currents, whirlpools, and boulders as high as the horse I was riding. There was holes washed out in places where the river would near hide itself under its own bank, and a feller had to be mighty careful in crossing to go straight ahead and not let the swiftness of the water get his horse swept along past the getting out place on the other side, or else both man and horse would have to

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swim on down the river a good mile before finding another landing place.

The banks was straight up and down on both sides and averaging eight and ten feet from the top to the water. I'd seen cattle drowned in that river pretty often, and noticed as I'd loped along trying to keep up with the critter so as I could pile my rope on 'er that there was no chance for anything but a fish in them waters when they was high—too swift. When a critter would hit one of them boulders she'd be turned over a half a dozen times, and then that same current would finally whirl 'er around and take 'er out of sight under the bank never to show up no more.

A cowboy had been drowned in that river a month or so before what I'm telling of happened; his horse finally got out of it somehow but that cowboy stayed in, and when the water went down that summer he was found buried in mud on a little island in the middle of it. One boot sticking up above the mud is all that told of his whereabouts.

But no thoughts of them happenings came to my mind as I made my horse take the water of that same river on the run. I was only thinking how I'd beat the boys in, turn my horse loose, and wait for 'em at the cook house. I was framing up what all I'd say to 'em when I heard the roaring of the swollen river fighting for a way over the big boulders, but even then I kept a loping along and heading straight for it plum forgetting what the last heavy rains had done since I crossed that river just a few days before. And it was pitch dark by then.

But it all came to me mighty quick as my horse jumped in, and then it was too late to turn back. My horse's legs was took right out from under him and he rolled over I don't know how many times. I had a heavy pair of chaps on, and a heavy coat, but none of that seemed to hinder me any when I realized what I'd jumped into.

I kicked my feet loose from the stirrups so I wouldn't be drug under and in the meantime I was making wild grabs for anything I could get a hold of. Nothing was handy for me to grab for quite a spell, and then just as I feel one of my hips connecting with a big boulder and I'm washed over past it, my fingers connect with long strands of hair. It was my horse's tail.

I sure hung on to that for I realized that if there was any way out that strong pony would sure find it. I'd lost all idea which way we was drifting but I did know we was sure making speed. The proof of that would come every time I'd come acrost a boulder, and then, of a sudden it seemed like all the water of that river was getting into my ears, nose, and mouth. Everything I'd done, good or bad, and from the time I was old enough to remember was run past in my mind, and all mighty clear; then came a time when I could hear little birds singing, and I could see big meadows all covered with flowers and the sun a shining for all it was worth. Everything was sure pretty and I don't know how long them thoughts and visions lasted but it seemed like for a long long time,—then I didn't remember no more, till I looked up, and seen stars and stars galore, then with the noise of the roaring waters at my feet I could hear bellering cattle all around. I layed that way for quite a spell and must of went to sleep or something for when I looked up again a moon was shining. Then I come to and begin to move my head around.

I was laying in water up near to my

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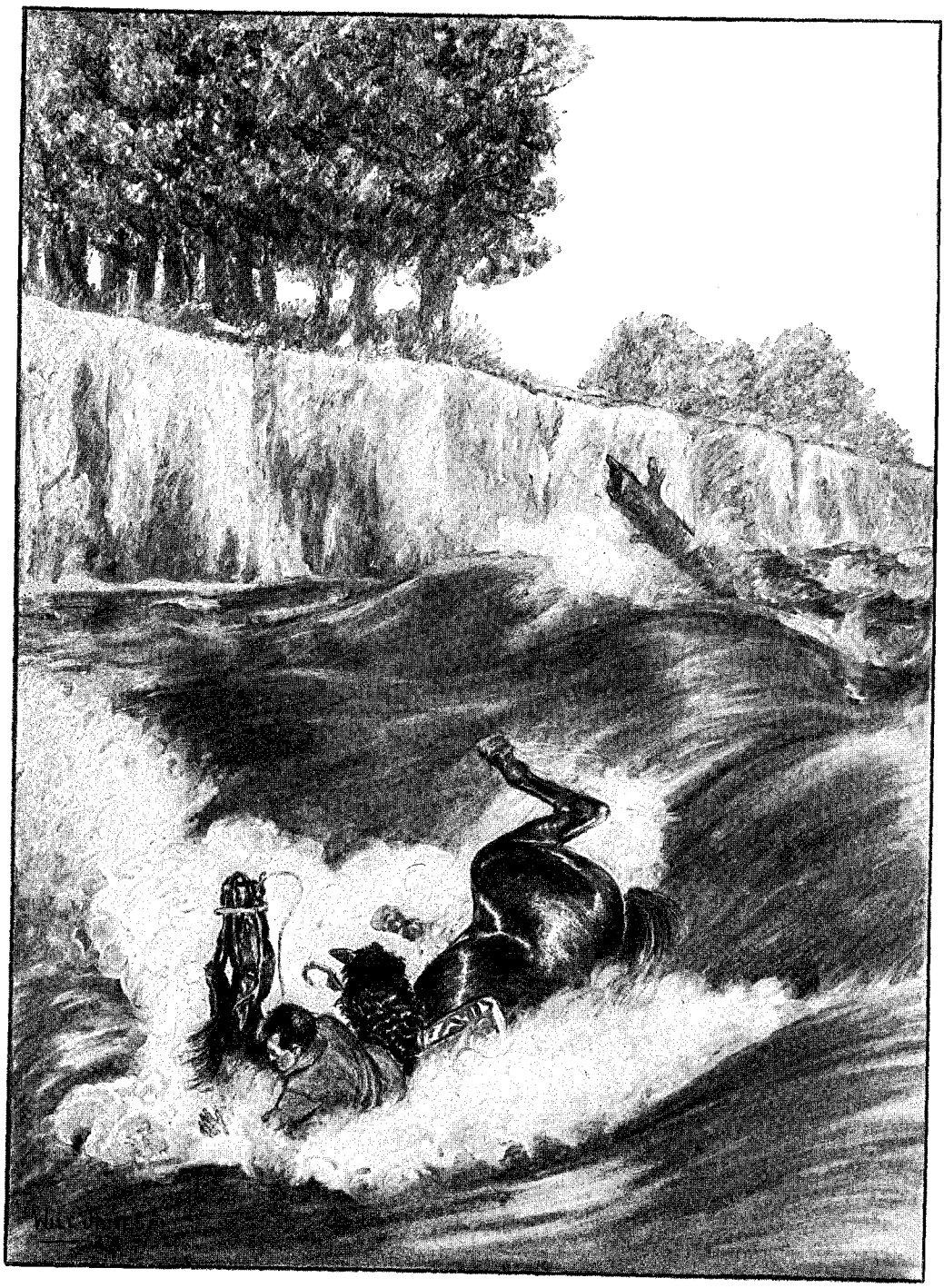

My horse's legs was took right out from under him and he rolled over I don't know how many times.

From a drawing by Will James.

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chin and when I tried to move I found a lot of mud had been washed over me and I could hardly budge. I was feeling mighty weak and pretty well bloated up but soon as I thought a while and gathered up facts on what might happen if I layed there much longer, I sure worked hard to get out of there. What, I thought, if I couldn't pull myself out? The mud would keep on accumulating and gradually bury me, and then the water was rising.

That was all the spurring I needed, and from then on I wasn't satisfied to linger there no more, but getting out was a hard job and when finally I dragged myself away from under the mud and the edge of the river on up to higher and dry ground I just layed there till the sun came up and warmed me up to raise my head once more.

In my right hand I was holding part of my horse's tail which showed how I come to be on the edge of the river instead of in the middle. I'd hung on to that tail till my horse had got on the bank where he just kicked me loose and let me lay.

Some of the boys found me sometime later, and when I got so I could talk fairly well I told 'em how I'd tried to beat 'em to camp by crossing the river and taking a short cut.

"The laugh is on you Bill," says one of the boys.

But none of 'em seemed to take advantage of it, and for my part I'll sure as hell never forget it.

Artillery Duel at Montfaucon

BY L. V. JACKS

Led into a trap, American artillerymen found themselves cannon fodder at gruesomely short range—a dramatic and heroic incident of the battle told by a newcomer whose sharp lean prose makes it one of the distinguished pieces of writing about war.

About the middle of September, 1918, the 119th Field Artillery was in billets around Wassy. Here the regiment was recuperating following the great Aisne-Marne and Oise-Aisne battles of July and August. On September 16 it was hurriedly summoned to take part in a projected drive which developed into what was later known as the Meuse-Argonne battle.

The attack shoved off on September 26, and the next day the 79th Division Infantry were stalled around Montfaucon. The 119th overtook them after a forced march from Esnes to Avocourt. The infantry colonels, who, strangely enough, had command of the field-guns, made a desperate effort to hurl the combined forces ahead. The 119th responded gamely to this demand, and rushed forward as fast as the exhausted men and horses could travel.

At about four o'clock a gold flood of sunlight broke through the clouds, and

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we saw the plain ahead dotted by thin lines of dough-boys straggling forward. On leaving the ruins of Malancourt we passed columns of ambulances along the road. They ran out into the ditches waiting for us to pass. They bore wounded and dying men for the hospitals, but they were required to wait with their loads till the guns had passed, for fighting troops were given right of way over everything. From time to time our men would glance curiously into the ambulances at the shattered and bleeding forms, many of them blackened, disfigured, and torn beyond recognition, as if trying to decide what they themselves would look like shortly. Their own mothers could never have recognized most of the bloody wrecks that lay in the ambulances.

Finally we caught a good glimpse of Montfaucon, a place that we were not to forget soon. The town of Montfaucon stands on the slopes and summit of a large hill. It is the highest eminence in all the country around, and formed the lookout of the German Crown Prince in 1916 while he watched the progress of his attacks upon Verdun. The hill is roughly cone-shaped, and at the base about two miles around. A number of long spurs and ridges, however, give it from some angles a rather pyramidal appearance. The houses are built closely together, and the stone-flagged streets are quite narrow, winding, and steep. The village is not of imposing size, but the houses were pretty, and when we first saw Montfaucon, with its red-tiled roofs and white walls shining in the afternoon sun, and surrounded by a green fringe of gardens and small orchards, it seemed very beautiful.

The sky was serried with towering tiers of cloud, and the fields and plains were just feeling the first strokes of frost. The horizon was a violet mist, and distant clumps of trees seemed covered with a blue canopy. The plain surrounding Montfaucon is of unequal breadth, but at most points four or five kilometres across. This ground seemed originally used for grazing, though evidently some years had elapsed since it had served any definite purpose. Thin lines of trees fringed a few of the roads, and in scattered places large copses approached the size of small artificial forests.

We had gradually descended from the higher ground, and the miry morass, by courtesy termed a road, in which we were wallowing, wound through the ruins of Malancourt. The battle line was very uneven in this locality, and we were surprised to see Montfaucon almost squarely to the west as we first drew up for action, the great flanking slopes of the hill shutting off the light of the sinking sun shortly before sunset. Soon after we saw it, the town became a target for artillery-fire, and was presently burning, with monstrous tumbling clouds of black smoke rolling away to the north on a light breeze.

The infantry had advanced with courage, and seemed to be making good headway. We noted that all their dead lay in little circles. It was instantly clear to us that they must be entirely inexperienced, or they would never group together while enemy field-gunners had them in sight. Most of the dead had been killed by a light shell dropped dexterously into the centre of a ring. Occasionally their officers scattered them, but it was difficult to keep them apart. They were evidently coming together for comfort and sympathy, forgetting that in their situation the best comfort lay in keeping far apart and

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offering enemy gunners the smallest possible target. Our guns wound quietly along the roads and into our assigned place.

A flaming artillery duel spouted into life to be suddenly quenched in the black darkness of the misty evening. The red jets flashed and vanished. As soon as the sun sank, massive clouds had gathered, and a chill drizzle had begun. We lay down on the cold mud and waited for further orders, but none came, though at intervals there was a roaring din from both flanks as though action were being distantly maintained.

The morning following was cloudy and cold. Intermittent firing rang all around, but low-hung clouds and trailing mists shut out much of our view. The fires in the suburbs were now all extinguished, and many approaches to the town were smouldering heaps of ashes. The infantry battled with the German snipers, and smart rifle duels cracked away merrily most of the day. Air activity was pronounced, but on account of the clouds we saw little of it. At times the fogs parted and the tall hill of Montfaucon loomed dim and menacing. That day we sensed a change in the angle of German fire. Soldiers in action often depend much on enemy fire to help out the sense of direction, and the least alteration in an enemy position may be discovered at once if the enemy is considerate enough to fire a few shots while changing places or just afterward.

Night brought no change in our situation, but shells from the north, seemingly all heavy, now arrived at towering angles. The thundering crash of the incoming projectiles proclaimed them howitzer shells. Our chief consolation lay in the fact that the muddy earth took heavy shells deep. Where we were the ground was almost a bog. Missiles shot in at irregular intervals, raising gushing black geysers and making a tremendous echoing roar, but causing no casualties. In the night there was a furious outburst to our right front. Star-shells glittered like meteors, fiery, beautiful bursts tossing wavering lights across the plain, and red and green flares burned with an unearthly glow. They painted queer shadows and gleams on the ragged holes and trenches, the broken equipment and the dead men flung among the barbed wire. The gloomy hill of Montfaucon and the enormous fog-banks and clouds upon all sides were illumined by flares and gun-fire. Over the midnight battle-ground scarlet jets of flame spurted from quick-firing guns as blood spurts from an open artery. Beyond Montfaucon were breathless intervals of rapid firing, and ghastly silence, but no settled action that we could detect.

At two in the morning we were ordered to advance. The mud was terrible. A message from General Pershing urging every one to make a special effort, and relating British victories in Belgium, had been sent along the line before sunset and some excitement resulted. The gunners fell upon their pieces with new energy. German gun-fire slackened. At the time we did not suspect the reason, but it seems that they were retiring toward Nantillois, straight north of Montfaucon. Their large guns covered their retreat with a very slow dropping fire, but our worst hindrance was the mud. At the moment we would gladly have parted with some of the protection it gave in return for a little firm ground. The gun crews seized the hubs and lifted and pulled frantically to aid the starved horses. We were but a few hundred yards from the

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road, but guns, horses, and men wallowed deep in the mire, and, strange as it may seem, hours went by while we floundered and struggled over that distance.

Light began to show in the east before our column was extricating its heavy equipment from the swamp and filing out on the highway. The advance began simultaneously at all points, and through the dull gloom we could hear, far and wide, the hoarse, long-drawn yell which was to be for many their last order on earth: "For'ard!"

Knowing that we were behind schedule, our column straightened out quickly once they were on the road. The regiment broke apart and there was considerable confusion. Corporal Nau and I left the column at about eight o'clock. Every one was soaked by the icy rain, and shivering and half frozen from wet and cold. We found a gallon bucket of something which was labelled butter but looked more like axle-grease. We set fire to it and it burned furiously. We warmed our chilled hands over the blaze and raced after the gun crews.

Montfaucon was a terrible wreck. It had been shelled for the past three days and was shattered from end to end. The regiment climbed the steep streets in a decidedly straggling column, and went on over the summit in a swirling mixture of fog and rain. Where the guide was trying to lead our organization was, and always will be, I imagine, a dark and doubtful mystery. He took the high road over Montfaucon toward Nantillois. It was a well-paved road, wide and covered with crushed rock, passing through watery meadows and marshes and between scattered thickets and groves. The fog was thick. No one suspected where we were going or where the Germans were. The sun remained hidden, but a sharp wind suddenly springing up swept away the wavering curtains of mist.

Imagine a roughly equilateral triangle of grassy ground, with sides about a mile in length, and the centre of its base against the hill of Montfaucon, a highroad leading straight from the centre of the base to the apex, and our regiment in a long and straggling column, hurrying down this road, the leading squads almost at the apex, the rear squads still on Montfaucon. In front and on both flanks were deep, dark woods. The grass on the triangular plot was too short to hide a rabbit. In the woods the retiring Germans had halted and turned around for another desperate stand. This, in fine, was the situation.

The enemy could see us clearly but were themselves largely concealed. They were reinforced by batteries of heavy artillery in their rear and above them, in the woody hills. Major Thompson, leading our advance, remarked to the driver of the first piece, as that man afterward related, that the column seemed to be getting into Germany, and asked him if he could turn around. He said he could, and proceeded to wheel his gun at once. This man was George O. Patterson, one of the most reliable men in the battery. The rest began to follow his lead. There were no infantry in sight anywhere.

Why the Germans did not fire sooner is a question. Perhaps they were waiting for the regiment to be hopelessly entrapped within their lines. At all events it was only after the column began to turn that they opened up. We had a clear view of the situation, for the machine-gun squads had been left at the end of the column, and we, thus, were the last to quit Montfaucon. It must

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have been considerably after 9 A. M. when we got out of the town.

In a moment it was evident that no troops could retire across the barren ground with a raking fire cutting them down from the rear, and Major Thompson ordered the guns wheeled around and the enemy fire returned. This was the worst fight, I believe, that we were ever in, for we made a perfect target, but nothing could be seen of the enemy except flashes. The helpless position of the regiment added to the confusion and made it almost impossible for all to act in concert. The Germans had several batteries of field-guns back of a little meadow not far within the woods. We made out their blazing flashes clearly and opened on them with the machine-guns at once. They returned the fire with vigor.

On going into action our 2d battalion swerved to the left away from the road, moving northwest some hundreds of yards across the open. Whether this was due to accident or design no one seemed to know. We had no time to look for the rest of the brigade, though we caught occasional glimpses of a regiment, later identified as the 147th, furiously in action about a kilometre northwest of us.

Other straggling machine-gun crews now joined ours. Most of the machine-gunners began firing from whatever position they were in when the action commenced, and our own squad opened at a point some two hundred yards nearer the highway than the battery to which we belonged. This whole battle at Montfaucon was so rapid, confused, and irregular, was spread over so much ground, and contained so many minor fights in which some participated but others not, that it is extremely difficult to make out any connected and orderly account of it. Questioning some of my companions on the following day left me with the impression that there were almost as many variant opinions about the fight as there were survivors. No one denied that it was swift and bloody beyond all previous experience. The machine-gun squad remained separated from the battery throughout the greater part of the day.

When field-gunners undertake to blast each other off the face of the earth at a few hundred yards' range, the struggle cannot last long. It was sledge-hammer work. D battery was put completely out of commission at the first destructive volley. Twenty-five of the twenty-eight men who made up their gun crews were killed or wounded, and D never discharged a shot. E and F fired rapidly, bringing all their guns to bear, and the German fire staggered. But, realizing their vast advantage, the enemy stood to their guns and sent it back as fast and hard as they could. We had no visual evidence that our fire did them any serious damage beyond an occasional faltering in their shooting, and doubtless we never reached some of their batteries at all. However, the machine-guns silenced the battery first attacked. I think we killed its gun crew, for after some minutes of concentrated fire its flashes disappeared for good and all. Dalton Carlington and Raymond Libby worked one of our guns, Corporal Nau, Mervin Colip, and I the other.

Then a tremendous blast from their heavier guns in the rear reached us. This fresh onslaught produced a perfect pandemonium among the scattered troops upon the hillside and along the road. The orchards and gardens by the highway were dotted with dead men and horses in an instant, and the dim

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atmosphere became sticky and choking with the poisonous fumes of gas and the sickening odor of high explosive. Gassed and wounded horses staggered screaming and plunging through this bedlam, there was yelling and yelping on either hand, the flaming machine-guns set up their clattering yammer in every direction, and all around rose the drumming roar of heavy guns and the crash of incoming shells.

Major Thompson dismounted and walked back and forth among the cannon to steady the men. Some of the privates who were facing the rain of shot coolly enough begged the major to lie on the ground, and to give his orders from that position, in which his body would be less exposed. He replied that the shot was not made that would kill him, and continued to walk up and down among the blazing guns, courageously followed by his orderly, Thomas Black. Lieutenant Herman Hale of E battery set an excellent example of coolness and alertness.

Our 1st battalion, in front of us, had an advantage. They were on lower ground, and it was difficult for the Germans to deflect their high-power 77s enough to reach the 1st. It is always easier to elevate field-guns than to deflect them, their construction offering no great arc for the lowering of the muzzle, so that they can have an elevation of 45 or more degrees, but a deflection of about 15 or less. So the 1st held out for some time, though they drew a great deal of scattering rifle-fire. But the 2d was hit right and left from the start, being farther to the rear and on higher ground. The German field-gunners were excellent marksmen if their riflemen were not. From the first our situation was, as Colonel McCormick afterward characterized it, simply impossible.

Man after man dropped and there was no one to fill the vacant places. The fire at F ceased. One of their sergeants had been firing the battery. The ground around his position was pitted with shell-holes. Howitzers over the hill of Montfaucon gave no assistance, and by this time the German fire, sweeping all the roads, prevented any more men from coming forward.

It takes a long time to describe it, but things happened with the utmost rapidity. A high-power shell exploding among our guns mortally wounded Major Thompson. Lieutenant Hale was the sole surviving officer at the guns. He ordered the men still able to move to leave the cannon and to get in the shell-holes. Every one fully expected that the enemy artillery-fire would be followed up by a furious infantry attack. Indeed there was never such a favorable opportunity. The gunners took rifles, revolvers, hand-grenades, any weapon that came in reach, and lay in the holes, waiting to withstand an assault. The machine-gun squad utilized a bale of hay as a breastwork, and crouched among some hedges and bushes not far from the highway while enemy shrapnel cracked and crashed above.

The German infantry must have lacked the courage to come forward. At all events there were no signs of an infantry attack, and as hours wore on it became evident that there would be none. An icy wind blew. Enemy guns tore at Montfaucon and shattered the town and the roads. Our kitchens were ferreted out and received a sweeping blast of shells. D's kitchen was completely wrecked and three cooks killed. Poison-gas was freely used on all sides. The Red Cross dugout was shelled vig-

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orously, but enemy fire was inaccurate. They located our first-aid station, however, and gave that a great blowing up.

Some of our men set extraordinary examples of courage. Leonard Field made three trips over Montfaucon after ammunition, while enemy shrapnel raged through the streets like a hurricane. Other drivers—Myers, Patterson, Barton Jones, Waldo Jones, Trout, McBeth, Ririe, and their companions—emulated his showing. A soldier from D battery, William Quigley, of Valentine, Neb., showed unusual heroism, carrying wounded to the aid stations, rushing with his dying burdens through heavy fire. All order seemed at an end, but the privates everywhere exhibited not merely good courage but an excellent grasp upon all that was going on and all that was yet to be done.

In the open field and under direct fire our men raced about recklessly, performing their tasks with energy and skill. Ammunition ran low. German planes surged down hurling in bombs and estimating the damage they had done. The machine-guns spoke out promptly on all sides with their harsh, stuttering crackle, but it was hard to stave off the planes with a very faltering fire.

Afternoon brought some relief. By this time news of our predicament must have been telephoned and telegraphed far and wide, for a fresh air fleet arrived, swinging up at great speed and scattering the German planes for the time. Long-range guns cut into the fight and added a little to the embarrassments of the enemy.

We had had no time to think of eating. We had had little to eat in the last forty-eight hours, and there would be nothing that day. Some of us betook ourselves to the gardens along the edge of the hill endeavoring to find something that could be chewed. There were a few heads of cabbage in a German garden, but covered with gas. After some debate we cut off the outer parts and ate the rest. We suffered no ill effects.

Before dark the sky cleared a little and the sun shone, lighting the most terrible wreck we had yet seen. I never before saw so many dead in one field. The whole smoky landscape was shattered by explosions, the roads a succession of yawning and gas-fuming craters. Trees were leafless in places, many branchless. Paraphernalia of all sorts were flung about, blackened, blood-soaked, and torn; gas and powder burns were painfully in evidence on all sides. The slanting lemon-yellow light shed an ugly glow over our depressing surroundings. A stormy and darkened sunset ended this disastrous day—Sunday, September 29.

The wreck of D battery was the most shocking scene of all. One of their men had been badly mangled by shrapnel at the first shot, and four companions threw him on a stretcher and started to run with him toward a first-aid station, when another shell, striking almost under the stretcher, destroyed all five. Another wounded man crept away to die alone, and struggled on his hands and knees down the hillside for sixty yards or more, leaving a crimson trail across the brown grass before he fell forward and expired. A human ear with a part of the scalp came flying through the air from a shell-burst, and fell upon the machine-gun, provoking a volley of oaths from the surprised crew. The horses proved themselves as good soldiers as any; though horribly frightened and trembling they stood fast in their traces while their compan-

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ions and drivers dropped around them, until the guns had been unlimbered and the animals could be unhitched and led away. Many horses choked in the gas, and E battery lost nearly all. Indeed the average life of a gun-horse at the front was only about fourteen days.

The naked slopes were covered with mournful relics, including many fragments of the 79th Division Infantry, who came up irregularly and were shot down on the exposed open. I saw one man who fell over on his back and was clutching a blood-soaked letter in his hand. I walked over to him with another machine-gunner, thinking he might have some ammunition we could use. He was dead when we reached him, and a shot carried away part of the letter, but we picked up the red fragment remaining and read all that was left, the last couple of lines scrawled in a small, feminine hand: "—come back to me and I will never fool you any more. Lovingly, Betty." He had been shot through the throat and had bled to death and had evidently dragged out her letter to read it again before he died. We looked at the letter and at the glazing eyes staring up to the rainy sky, and my companion said: "The dead man is the winner, and she will never make a fool of him again."

Curiously enough, one or two of our hardened battalion broke down and cried bitterly when they saw especial friends knocked down, quivering and dead beside them, passing quickly from tears to outbursts of helpless rage and hoarse vows that they would kill impossible numbers of the enemy in retaliation, angry threats solemnized by a meaningless flood of curses. Language seemed to have lost, finally, all significance, and there were no words left to express the men's ideas.

We worked during the night at the gun positions, shifting some locations. Caissons came rushing up from every direction, bringing more ammunition, though the roads offered immense difficulties. Some pioneer outfits helped to fill the worst holes. The Germans shelled the roads, and especially the crossroads, continually, and, as most of us were tramping about nearly all night, we had plenty of chances to dodge as we went from one place and from one task to another. Red flares burned fitfully, tossing enormous wavering lights over the scene. They painted ghastly splashes of color on the many pallid faces that lay around the guns, staring fixedly through the gloom. There were so many corpses of the 79th Division Infantry on the hillsides that some had to be dragged away to make a path through which ammunition could be brought to the guns without driving over the bodies. The aversion that the soldiery showed to stepping on a dead man was only equalled by the horror of the horses in the same situation. A perfect windrow of the 79th lay behind our battery, thirty-nine bodies being piled in one heap. The night rang hideously with the uproar of unsteady but vicious fighting. Most of our supporting howitzers were getting lined up by this time and firing spasmodically.

A machine-gunner, Mervin Colip, a runner, L. C. Van Cleve, a gas-man, Will Ryan, and I finally tried to sleep in a tiny shack near the main road. It was a half-dugout apparently formerly occupied by a German officer. A little dough-boy wandered in too and lay down on the floor. There were intermittent moments of terrible silence between the dull booming of more distant guns and the ripping crashes of shells near at hand, filled by the hoarse

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choked breathing of the exhausted boys trying to sleep. Then came the terrific shriek of a heavy shell headed straight for us, and there was a second of apprehension while every one grew rigid till the projectile struck, with a monster blow, at the base of the outer wall and exploded, driving the side of the shack in on us. A shower of slugs and steel fragments whizzed through the hut, and a cloud of shining smoke drifted in. Van Cleve remarked, after a short space of strained silence, that there was no damage done, and we lay still. Shells crashed about irregularly, and a few minutes later one came roaring up like an express-train, and hit near the hut where the first had struck, and we were again treated to a ragged rain of shot. The little dough-boy rose on one elbow and asked: "Has anybody anything to propose?" The poor chap was clearly new at the front, for he must have thought there was a remedy somewhere. We suppressed a nervous desire to laugh, and Van Cleve said quietly: "Lie down and go to sleep." Curiously enough, no one tried to leave the hut. Every one was so utterly exhausted and downcast that he lay where he was, not much caring what happened.

It would be giving a wrong idea to imply that we slept soundly, or indeed that we ever slept, in reality. What was called sleep was usually a fitful, feverish doze, from which one might be roused at any instant, only to sink back again into a dull lethargy. I did not even doze that night. A sergeant in D battery had been selected to go to an officer's training-camp for a commission, and that morning had received the order to leave his battery and to go to the rear. He walked back to the kitchen while the action was in progress, and halted to shake hands with some friends among the cooks. The driver with whom he was to ride became frightened and impatient at the delay, and started down the road to the rear. The sergeant still lingered, planning, doubtless, to run after the truck and overtake it, but a second later the fatal blast of shells hit D's kitchen. A great steel fragment divided his skull down the middle as cleanly as if his head had been split in two by a gigantic axe, leaving but one side of his face. It was clay-colored and terrible. He fell straight back. Two or three of us who were within thirty yards ran toward D to offer help if any one were still alive, but D was manned only by the dead. One of the cooks sat cross-legged, with his back against an apple-tree and a pan of potatoes on his lap. In one hand he held a potato, and in the other a paring-knife very firmly clutched. His head leaned forward a little, and I thought him alive and spoke to him. It was not till I came alongside that I saw a tiny hole in his left temple where the fatal shot had gone in, and a small trickle of blood was dripping down. He was quite dead. Another lay outstretched on his right side under a tree, a little farther in the orchard, with his head resting on his arm as peacefully as if he had fallen asleep. The others were piled awkwardly in tumbled heaps, with a few horses lying in an outer ring choking on gas. Every night for a time afterward, when we tried to sleep, that ghastly scene among the apple-trees came to mind, with the terrible half-face and its look of mingled surprise, agony, and despair.

The next morning we moved our Hotchkiss gun forward to a position parallel with the other guns, and sunk it three feet in firm clay, feeling that that would be sufficient intrenchment

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for the time. Other squads dug in deeper, covering themselves with camouflage. The battle at Montfaucon was a fight to the death if there was ever one.

Our officers told us afterward that the orders from the infantry colonels who were controlling our activities during the early part of the advance were to take a position at Nantillois. After passing Montfaucon it was discovered from a runner that the Germans still held Nantillois, and the 79th Division was not only not attacking Nantillois, but had not got anywhere near it, and our regiment was advancing straight in among the German infantry. Colonel McCormick countermanded the order, intending to try to get the guns and caissons camouflaged in the trees beside the hill, but before anything could be done the action was under way.

Sombre Serenade

By Bernice Kenyon

Now since this night is only one breath long,
Now that the hour is late,
Open your window for a final song
Sung from the gathered shadow and the depth
Of silence where I wait.

You who have never waited, nor felt time
Stealing your anxious breath,
Look down, look down, before the clock's far chime
Strikes a last note, and our brief days run out,
And we are found by death.

For death is close upon the heels of those
Who love; and you will see
How fast he comes—how many ways he knows
To track my steps, or yours, who will not once
Look down and answer me.

And soon the summer will be done, and soon
No one will sing for you
From the still poplar-shade, and no late moon
Silver the garden leaves, no lover at all
Tread dark on the bright dew.

And there will be but cold wind in this place,
A raw wind full of rain—
Singing the ageless night, but not your face;
Singing the dark, unmindful that you watch
Behind your window-pane.

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A CURIOUS STORY BY A NEW WRITER

The Can-Rusher

BY OSCAR E. JENSEN

GEE! but we had fun in the good old days. I guess the most fun we kids had was with the Can-rusher.

He lived in a shack. The shack was in the willows out near Long's Creek, just a little ways from where the creek runs under the culvert on Bladdock's Road. My earliest impression was that the shack had always been there, hidden away in the willows.

After a spring freshet, we kids would hunt for Indian relics along the eroded banks of Long's Creek. Concurrent with my archaeological enthusiasm, was the notion that the ancient Can-rusher had sneaked along with his tin pail during the romantic days of the Black Hawk War.

Then came the rather startling mental apprehension of Can-rusher having had a mother. I may have picked that up from the kids. I may have gleaned that, along with other bits of back-fence gossip, as I was exploring the alleys for bottles, scrap-iron or other articles of commerical value to a boy. I can still feel a trifle creepy when I think of the Can-rusher having, at any period of his life, a mother.

Then, one day when I was tending the pasture tollgate for old man Long, I learned definitely that there had formerly been a neat cottage occupying approximately the site of the Can-rusher's shack. It had been built, according to old man Long's story, by the young bloods of the town as a rendezvous for poker parties and other indoor recreations. I also learned that the Can-rusher had been born there.

The cottage had been destroyed by fire. Can-rusher's mother had been ordered to leave. She had been found dead in a crabapple thicket several miles from where the cottage had stood. The County had buried her. Old man Long had permitted the Can-rusher to build a shack. The willows thrived on the wood-ashes residual from the cottage. The shack was soon effectually concealed. How old the Can-rusher was at this time I do not know. Those who knew never mentioned the matter.

The Can-rusher's clothing was like the Can-rusher. Filthy; cast-off; discarded. Sometimes they were too tight. Sometimes they hung on him like a buckskin-glove on a door-knob. It depended entirely on the ash-barrel that had yielded the find.

He was a ragpicker. He had a withered arm. He would roll up the sleeve on that arm. When some one pegged a snowball or a rock, depending on the season, he would wave his crippled arm and cry "Eek! Eek!" and the sleeve would come unrolled and then his with-

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ered arm would flap like a broken wing. It was great fun. It was always good for a laugh.

Dan Phalen ran up behind him one day and caught the Can-rusher's flapping wing. He jerked, and the Can-rusher fell backward into a puddle of filthy water in the rear of the livery stable. He spilled his beer. He fell on his tin pail that he used for rushing the can. It was dented so badly that the bottom sprung loose from the sides. The Can-rusher sat in the puddle of manure water and cried. First he'd cry a while, then he would go "Eek! Eek!" and flap his wing. The loafers around the livery stable declared that it was better than a circus. The kids laughed over it for weeks. Dan Phalen was a hero. Had this happened a few weeks earlier, I should probably have gone into hysterics. But I had fallen in love—and I had enlargement of the heart. I sailed into Dan Phalen. He licked hell out of me.

The Millers had returned from Europe. They had a little girl. Her name was Blanche. Mrs. Miller was the daughter of Colonel Rutherford. Blanche was his favorite grandchild. We were madly in love. I was looking through their ash-barrel when I met her. We talked. It was a case of love at first sight. She went to the basement and carried out a great number of things. I piled them in the little wagon, in which I hauled my scrap-iron, bottles, and old rags. When she called me to help her carry out the lawnmower, I suspected that something was wrong. I was about ten years old at the time. My judgment was good. We carried back the great number of things. Her mother was watching and laughing. Blanche said that she would kiss me when I washed my face. I hurried home and washed my face. Then she kissed me. That was why I sailed into Dan Phalen. I wished to tell Blanche about it. I didn't mention the matter to her.

She had blue eyes with the funniest black specks of irregular shapes in the iris. They seemed like tiny leaves floating in a pond when the sky is clear. I used to notice them a lot—at first. Then there came a period when I could see nothing but the black eyelashes that hung like shaded willows over the pond.

I could probably tell more about Can-rusher's mother were it not for Blanche Miller. I was so deeply in love with Blanche that my mind refused to register the gossip.

Those of us whose fathers worked in the saw-mill and at the plough-shops pastured cows in Long's pasture. The cows were not yielding as abundantly as the conditions of the pasture seemed to warrant, and the families who had boys effected an arrangement whereby various boys were to take turns in keeping an eye on the cows. It was believed that some one was milking the cows while they rested in the shade of the walnut and elm trees of the grove. When it was my turn to watch the cows, I wandered far afield on a quest for lady's-slippers for Blanche.

Henry Shaler, a lad of about eleven or twelve years of age, my rival for the affections of Blanche Miller, learned of my defection. He saw in it a great opportunity. On a certain afternoon he dashed barefooted along the streets in a sort of unmounted Paul Revere's ride, and informed the owners of the pasturing cows that Can-rusher was milking the cows. I got a licking that evening for neglecting my post.

Later that night the men-folks gathered at our house. I was terribly frightened for a time. I thought I was about

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to receive a whipping from each of them. They met in our kitchen. I was kept out of the kitchen. I sneaked out of a window and found a mob of kids. They seemed to have acknowledged Henry Shaler as their leader. My humiliation was unspeakable. In spite of the fact that the meeting of the owners of the cows was being held in our kitchen—an event which, ordinarily, would have been to my great glory under any circumstances—I was absolutely ignored.

After a long while the men filed out. They had lanterns, and they walked in absolute silence. We kids trailed behind. I brought up the rear because of the ignominy of my position as the unfaithful watchman. It was a tense, dramatic hour.

Old man Kelly kicked the Can-rusher's door open. The Can-rusher was lying unconscious on the floor. He had a broken leg. He had been there for over a week, so the doctor said.

For a long time after that, we kids would catch the thumb of one hand in a cow-milking pantomime whenever Henry Shaler showed up at the swimming-hole. Henry was compelled to fight his way back. When it came my turn I had the strength of my great love for Blanche. I licked hell out of Henry Shaler, who had only a day or two before compelled Dan Phalen to call quits. Then I sailed in and licked hell out of Dan Phalen.

The Can-rusher was taken to the County Hospital. His leg failed to knit properly although they had broken it over again. After that he was a sight. His leg would slip at times and he would fall in a heap. And spill his beer. The kids had great fun with him. Henry Shaler pestered the life out of the Can-rusher.

On the day of the first snow the kids had followed the Can-rusher to his shack. They were pelting him with snowballs. The snow was light and failed to hold together. They pelted rocks at him. Some one caught him on the side of the head and he dropped. The kids scattered. They were all somewhat relieved when they saw him on his way to the saloon on the following day. The snow was better then.

But the Can-rusher came quite close to getting what was coming to him later on.

A little girl of the town came home late from school. She told a *real* one.

The meeting that night was at the Biddleford's. I hung around with the kids—outside. I thought I'd freeze. Finally the men-folks came filing out. I heard Mrs. Biddleford crying as the door was closed. The men-folks ordered us kids back—told us to go home. Fat chance! We strung along behind. Gosh! it was dark! The lanterns looked like fireflies or ignis fatuus bobbing along ahead of us.

Colonel Rutherford came dashing along on his big bay horse. He caught up with the men-folks just as they were kicking the Can-rusher's door in. He was shouting to them. We kids got there just as Colonel Rutherford was backing up against the door. Two men were on the ground. One of them pulled out a horse-pistol from under his coat. He was pointing it at Colonel Rutherford when a lot of men jumped on him and took the pistol away from him. Colonel Rutherford had got his breath and was talking. He had a wonderful voice. You could have heard it for blocks. Some one kept interrupting him. Then several men started to taunt him about something or other. I heard a lot of talk about "bastard" and other

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swear words. It looked very promising —for a pitched battle. Some of the men were lining up alongside of Colonel Rutherford. The other men asked them how much money they owed to Rutherford. Colonel Rutherford was very rich. Just as the mob in front were getting ready to rush in and mix it with Colonel Rutherford and his gang, two women came staggering into the thick of it. One of them was the mother of this little girl. She started to talk—and the men were quiet. She said that her little girl had 'fessed up that it was a fib. The other woman was the mother of a little girl with whom the first little girl had been playing—when the Can-rusher was supposed to be stacking the cards for a swell little lynching bee. The men scattered. Later in the evening they returned. They dragged the Can-rusher out of his shack and burned the shack down. We kids saw it. We had hung around, talking about the great fun we had missed.

The Can-rusher had on an old coat. I saw his undershirt by the lantern-light when the men dragged him out. The Can-rusher sneaked over and scrunched down in a clump of willows. When a snowball would hit him, he would go "Eek! Eek!" and then start to cry. Henry Shaler and Dan Phalen were sneaking up behind the Can-rusher. I don't know what they were planning on. Two men with their overcoat collars pulled up over their faces loomed up behind them. We kids heard Henry and Dan let out a yell. Then we scattered. They looked like black ghosts, those two men. This was on a Friday night.

Colonel Rutherford had a club. It was in a big room over Nelson's coal office. There were four men in the club. They were all old men. Besides Colonel Rutherford and Nelson, there were Sherman and Cable. They were all rich men. They liked beer. They played poker at this club. I swept out the club room and kept up the fire for them. They would send me over to Murray's saloon for beer. When they drank whiskey or wine they would take it from what they called the "holiday locker," in a back room which was kept locked.

When I went to the club room the night after the big excitement, I found the room warm and cozy. The Can-rusher was asleep in a corner of the big room. He was doubled up on an old overcoat. He reminded me of a mongrel dog that had come to our house some nights before. My mother would never turn away anything that looked as if it were hungry. She spread an old coat in the wash-house for this stray. Some one had spread the old overcoat for the Can-rusher. I had my lantern held close to the Can-rusher's face when he woke up. I almost dropped the lantern. His eyes were blue—and there were tiny specks, like leaves, floating about in the blue. They were beautiful eyes. I got sore at the Can-rusher for having eyes like Blanche Miller's. Gee! I was sore! Then I had the surprise of my life. I had never heard the Can-rusher say anything other than "Eek! Eek!" While I was looking at his eyes and trying to make up my mind whether to give him a good kick and run, he opened his eyes so big that they scared me, and he said: "I be friend on you."

I had only recently learned a dandy swear-word. I said: "The hell you say!" Then I was going to baste him one, but Old Nelson came puffing up the stairs. I asked him whether I had to keep up fire for the Can-rusher, and he smiled and patted me on the head. He owned more coal-mines than anybody around there,

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and they said he used to give away more coal than he sold. He used to give me a suit of clothes for a Christmas present while I looked after the club room.

Pretty soon Colonel Rutherford came in. He sat down at the table and asked Nelson to bring out King Charley. They had pet names for every bottle in the "holiday locker." He and Nelson had several drinks. Colonel Rutherford looked older than Methuselah. He hardly spoke a word. He had taken a seat where he could see the Can-rusher. Then he got up and moved to another chair, where his back would be toward the Can-rusher. The Can-rusher was behind him—all evening.

Then Sherman and Cable came "stomping" in. They were covered with snow. When Sherman came in, he pointed to the Can-rusher and asked Nelson: "Did it have anything to eat?" Nelson said: "I sent up some scraps." Colonel Rutherford took two drinks —one right after the other. I felt kind of creepy. Then Colonel Rutherford asked: "Will we need the kid?" And Nelson said: "Let him stay. We might want some beer for a chaser."

Everybody seemed to feel about as uncomfortable as I did. They drank quite a good deal—always from the "holiday locker." It looked like a slim night for me. Finally Nelson gave me a dollar and told me to get a can of beer. He said: "Keep the change." I felt better, but it was a battle to reach the saloon. The wind was blowing a gale—and the snow was like needle-points. When I got back, they gave the Can-rusher a glass of beer. He had refused to drink whiskey. Then old Cable gave me a dollar—and I got some more beer. It was a great night. I had never told my mother about the beer tips. Everything I earned was "wages." I planned on a lot of things I might buy for her with the extra money I had already earned. I hoped for more. I was happy. I seemed alone.

After a while they quit drinking beer. The Can-rusher was asleep. I would throw a shovelfull of coal into the big heater. Then I would doze. Sometimes they would talk so loud that I would wake up—and jump. One time they were having an argument. Old Nelson was leaning across the table and he had a finger pointed right into Colonel Rutherford's face. The colonel was backing away—and almost fell over backwards. Nelson was saying:

"Damn you! I spent all that year at school in the East. I didn't graduate until 1820. Look here!" He reached in his pocket and pulled out an old notebook. "The State was admitted into the Union in 1818, and the kid was born the following year. I went with my folks back to the old country during my vacation in 1818. That lets me out."

I had heard some of the same kind of talk before, and as I didn't have the least idea what it was all about, I dozed off to sleep again. Somebody hollered at me and I woke up again, and fixed up the fire. They were getting pretty drunk by that time. Colonel Rutherford was crying, and Sherman was walking up and down the room. Cable was reciting poetry, and Nelson had an empty bottle in his hand. He was striking the bottle against his finger-ring and it kept clinking almost as steady as a clock ticks. Nelson said something about some one having brown hair, and Colonel Rutherford nodded his head. But old Sherman swung around and shouted: "She had hair just like the kid there." I jumped about a foot, but I saw that Sherman was pointing at the Can-

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rusher. I started to laugh, but no one paid any attention to me. I thought it was a joke.

The Can-rusher had fidgeted around in his sleep. His shirt was open at the neck. Sherman as he was pacing up and down the floor happened to glance at the Can-rusher. He came over and got my lantern and carried it to where the Can-rusher was stretched out. He stooped over and moved the Can-rusher's head a little. Then he walked back to the table, and he was holding a chain in his hand. It glittered in the light. I'll bet it was gold. There was a heart-shaped locket attached to the chain. Sherman leaned over the table and the old men got their heads together. I'd have given my night's earnings to have peeked. When I sneaked up, old Sherman looked around at me—and I went back by the stove. But Sherman wasn't sore. His voice was just as soft as anything when he said: "That's just the way she looked when she came in from the farm and went to work for us."

Then Nelson handed me another dollar and told me to run along home. As I was putting on my heavy woollen coat, Colonel Rutherford reached in his pocket and handed me—a five-dollar gold piece. I said: "This isn't a penny." He merely replied: "I know it." And then he nodded his head toward the Can-rusher. I knew what he meant. And this is the first time I've spoken of it. That was nearly sixty years ago, when it happened.

Next thing I knew the Can-rusher had a cabin out by the river. Some of the people wondered about it for a while, and my sister tried to get me to tell what I knew. All I would do was to go around saying: "I know something I won't tell." Can-rusher had pretty good clothes—they weren't picked out of ash-barrels. I stopped at his cabin a few times and he would try and talk with me. He got his words all mixed up. I asked him on one occasion if he knew how old he was, and he shook his head. The only bad part of life for him was that he had to walk nearly three miles for beer. He went to a little town farther up the river.

I guess the old Can-rusher would be living yet but we had a terrible blizzard one night during the winter that followed the one when he was the guest of honor — or whatever it was — at the club.

The Shermans were having a sleighing-party that night—the night the blizzard came up. I wasn't invited. Blanche Miller was in the party. Walter Sherman told me all about it—afterward. They had a big bobsled packed with straw and kids. They were having a great time when the blizzard hit. The horses got stuck at the bottom of the hill that leads from the river road up to the big Sherman mansion.

Everybody piled out and started to walk up the hill. Walter said that the wind was so terrible that he and Blanche Miller went around along the side hill. As they came from behind a big clump of trees the wind hit them like a great icy hand, and the next thing he knew he and Blanche were lost—right in his own yard. They stumbled along, trying to get out of the wind, and Blanche got sleepy and wanted to rest a little while. He tried to shout, but he said his mouth filled with snow every time he would let a whoop out of him.

You should have heard Walter tell about it. The next thing he knew he was lying on the floor of the Can-rusher's cabin. He said he felt as though he had prickly heat all over him. He could-

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n't move. But you can imagine how he felt. Just a little way from him, close to the open door, with the wind whipping snow into the room, was the Can-rusher kneeling down on the floor—and he had a blanket that he was trying to hold over Blanche Miller—and Walter said she was naked. The Can-rusher was saying: "God!—God!—God!" and he was rubbing snow on this little naked girl. Walter said he was frantic, and finally he staggered over and kicked at the Can-rusher. Then the Can-rusher boxed his ears and made him rub snow on Blanche. Every little while, he would move her a little closer in—away from the door. Walter said he kept hollering to the Can-rusher to take Blanche in by the fire, but whenever Walter tried to drag the blanket closer to the fire, the Can-rusher would strike at him and say: "God!—God!" Then the Can-rusher hit Walter so hard that Walter fell against a wood-box and he said that he fainted.

When he came to his senses the Can-rusher was kneeling by his bunk, and Blanche was all bundled up on the bunk. She was petting the Can-rusher's cheeks and saying: "I knew you'd find me, Uncle Harry." Walter and I had a good laugh when he told me that. The old Can-rusher didn't have *any* name—other than Can-rusher. But Walter explained it by saying that Blanche was delirious, and she thought the Can-rusher was her Uncle Harry who was killed at Gettysburg, just after he had been home on furlough. Blanche must have been only four or five years old at that time—so she couldn't remember anything about her Uncle Harry—except his name.

When Walter told me this, I had a kind of creepy feeling, wondering how the funny little leaves in her blue eyes must have felt when they met the tiny leaf-like specks in the Can-rusher's blue eyes. Maybe Blanche's Uncle Harry had eyes like that. The Can-rusher was saying as he knelt by the bunk, saying over and over: "Happy God!—Happy God!" Walter and I had a great laugh over that. Then the Can-rusher started to cry, and Walter said: "He cried a tub full."

After a long time the Can-rusher went out and brought in a lot of wood, and showed Walter how to look after the fire in the little box heater that he had in his cabin. Walter wouldn't talk to the Can-rusher on account of his having taken Blanche's clothes off—and rubbing snow on her. Walter said that once when he was bringing in the wood his bum leg caved in, and he flopped on the floor. Walter said it was funny.

Then the Can-rusher lit a lantern and started out for Sherman's house, but he froze to death on the way.

It was the following summer when Walter told me about that night in the Can-rusher's cabin. Old Colonel Rutherford had died just a short while after the Can-rusher was buried. We were walking out Bladdock's Road, and Walter was picking flowers whenever he found any growing close to the road. He was laughing a lot—and of course I got to laughing over the way he told it to me. When we reached the cemetery, Walter laughed so hard his lips were trembling, and he said: "Let's go in and see the old Can-rusher's grave."

There was a gravestone at the head of the Can-rusher's grave. It looked tiny alongside the fine big stone at the head of Colonel Rutherford's grave. Walter had placed the flowers on the Can-rusher's grave, and he was leaning,

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with his back toward me, against the big stone at the head of the colonel's grave. He looked as though he was crying—although he had laughed a lot on the way out. While I was waiting for him to get through crying I wrote down in a little note-book what was cut on the Can-rusher's gravestone:

Uncle Harry. In compliance with the wishes of Blanche Rutherford Miller, whose life he saved together with that of Walter Forbes Sherman.

Died December 11, 1870

Sketch from Portrait

By Gwendolen Haste

Old Bill Fairweather looks at me
Out of Dimsdale's history:
"Discoverer of Alder Gulch
In the spring of eighteen sixty-three."

Rattlesnakes were kind to Bill.
He gathered them from the stony hill.
They writhed upon his rusty beard
Or coiled against him, dry and chill.

He marched around the medicine bush.
He jerked it loose in the awful hush.
He beat the head of the medicine man
And watched the terrible arrows gush.

He dug for gold in the rocky crust,
But he always flung away the dust,
Letting the hot mob bicker and whine,
While he rode free from hate and lust.

Peace River saw him headed high,
Bound for Alaska and the sky,
But he came to the Robbers' Nest at last,
Hunting a quiet place to die.

This is the life that I'd like best—
To carry rattlers in my breast,
To fling my gold to the scrambling crowd,
And peacefully die in the Robbers' Nest.

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As I Like It

BY WILLIAM LYON PHELPS

MIAMI—the Magic City! the Wonder City! Three New Years had I seen arrive there, in 1923, 1924, 1925. Since then that happy land has been visited by two disasters—a destructive hurricane and a financial crash. I had been informed that the present condition of Miami, with relation to its past, was like the morning after or a deflated tire.

We had a comfortable railway journey thither on the Atlantic Coast Line, arriving on time, something that did not always happen during the era of prosperity; and as we motored across the city to Commodore Matheson's house in Coconut Grove, I looked around for evidences of tragedy and defeat. I failed to see them, because there are none in sight. The Miami that greeted my Yankee vision in December, 1927, was such a striking improvement on the Miami I had left in 1925, that, had I not known of the appalling calamity of wind and water and the cruel financial setback, I should not have guessed that either of these misfortunes had happened.

I have seen plenty of towns with a "busted boom," and I know what they look like. Miami looked like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, or as a strong man rejoicing to run a race. The new Biscayne Boulevard is one of the finest avenues in the world; in place of the tottering old wooden bridge connecting Miami with Miami Beach, there is a magnificent permanent causeway, while the other causeway has been doubled in width; the grotesquely inadequate street in front of the city hotels, lined with fish-markets and miserable shacks, had disappeared like a bad dream. In its place are four fine boulevards which will take care of vehicular traffic for the next fifty years; while still more remarkable, on the other side of these boulevards, where the sea used to be, is a magnificent public park, covered with green turf and lovely trees. There are those who can make two blades of grass grow where one grew before, but the people of Miami make millions of blades of grass grow where before was only salt water.

In addition to these amazing surface improvements, which show not only courage and foresight but imagination and good taste, I looked in wonder at the tall buildings; *The News* tower and other structures remind one of downtown New York. The sky-line of Miami, viewed from a distance, is enchantingly beautiful; it rises in silver beauty like Venus from the sea.

When I was last in Coral Gables, there were a few houses there, and a nine-hole golf-course. Now it is a good-sized city, with hundreds of beautiful dwellings, with a thirty-six-hole golf-course, with a university, and with a hotel, the Biltmore, admirable architecturally, crowned by a tower 350 feet high. The view from the top of this tower I shall never forget; I saw the whole of southern Florida.

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I do not know of any better illustration of the indomitable American spirit than is afforded by the people of Miami, even though they cannot afford it. I repeat, the one impression made upon me was the opposite of what I had expected; it was not loss, it was gain; it was not retrogression, it was advance; it was not defeat, it was victory. The fact that the people have suffered horribly makes their attitude all the more inspiring.

Perhaps the difference between the Miami I left and the Miami I found can best be expressed by the words "fever" and "health." The Miami before the hurricane was flushed with fever; at present it has the glow of health.

I visited the University of Miami at Coral Gables and made an address to the students and faculty. What they lack in traditions they make up in enthusiasm. The men and women on the faculty are brave-hearted; they are all underpaid, but they love their work. Commercial prosperity is essential, but man cannot live by bread alone. The university gives to the place a mental and spiritual tonic. It has a fine orchestra, and I heard a quartet of students sing difficult music in a manner that would have been a credit to professionals.

We were the guests of Commodore William J. Matheson at his beautiful house in Coconut Grove. He should write an autobiography, for he is one of the most interesting men in America and has had many unusual experiences. He is furthermore an expert in the fine art of conversation. At the foot of his garden is his private wharf; there we embarked on his yacht, and sailed across Biscayne Bay to the charming Moorish house, Mashta, designed by him, standing on the edge of one of the keys. On this trip Mr. Matheson had as additional guests Gene Tunney, champion boxer of the world, and his friend Mr. William Powell, a graduate of Amherst. During our two weeks in Miami I saw a good deal of Mr. Tunney, playing golf with him and having long and intimate talks. He is even better than gossip reports. He has charming manners, is well read, loves good books, the best poetry, and the best music.

Golfing one day with another group, I had the narrowest escape from death in my experience, and, although I have enjoyed what is called a "sheltered" life, I have had six "close calls." One of our party drove out of bounds, but was not sure of the fact until the caddie shouted; he then turned back to the tee to drive again. Three of us were standing about thirty feet away, but, as we supposed, sufficiently to one side. The man who drove the ball was over six feet in height; he hit a tremendous wallop; the ball came on a line and struck me on the top of my head, burning my scalp as it passed, but doing no damage. Had its flight been one half-inch lower, I should have been instantly killed.

On December 28 we started on Mr. Matheson's yacht for a four days' cruise around the south shore of Florida. This was a memorable experience. We sailed in and out among the keys, saw the "seagoing railroad," and entered Shark River on the west coast. We penetrated far into the interior, and one night anchored at Five Points, where there are five lanes of water leading off through the green trees. Here two of us went tarpon-fishing in the moonlight. We were in a tiny power-boat; the dark, unruffled water, the forest on the shores, the moon and stars overhead, the absolute silence of the night. I had out fifty feet of line. Suddenly I felt a tremen-

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dous pull. I pulled in the opposite direction, and then with my rod I began to pump, reeling in the line as I leaned forward. Though I was thinly clad, I soon began to sweat, and my arms began to ache. After a while there was a tremendous disturbance in the water, and when I had hauled my prize within ten feet, the tarpon leaped clear out of the stream, gleaming like polished silver in the moonlight. He shook his head with a curiously negative expression, the hook flew out of his mouth, and I saw him no more. I shall probably never meet him again. Instead of disappointment, I was pleased, which shows that I am no fisherman. All I wanted was the experience of feeling him on the line and of seeing him close. I was and am glad he got away, and I hope he is still enjoying his well-won freedom.

On the last day of the year Mr. Matheson had as guests the bishop of Florida, the Right Reverend Cameron Mann, and his vivacious and charming wife. Although I was brought up a strict non-conformist, I like bishops—they are good fellows, and this one particularly so. Gene Tunney and the bishop got along together in fine style, and we had much good talk. That night we celebrated the passing of the old year by a large dinner-party at the Royal Palm, given by our friends Mr. and Mrs. Gaston Drake. Mr. Drake was an athlete at Princeton in his undergraduate days, and is now a mighty hunter. Within forty miles of Miami he shot two fine bucks while we were there, so we had venison, and very good it was. That was not a cheap dinner; some of the vegetables may have been inexpensive, but the meat was deer.

On the 1st of January, a few hours before we left, Mr. Harvey Firestone and his son called and presented me with a curious and valuable book, of which only about a hundred copies were printed. It is a large quarto, beautifully got up, and illustrated with many photographs, interesting and diverting because of their intimacy. The book was written by the late John Burroughs, and is a diary of an automobile journey through West Virginia and Virginia taken by Henry Ford, Thomas Edison, Harvey Firestone, and John Burroughs in 1918. The best things in the volume are not, as might be expected, the descriptions of natural scenery; the best things are the remarkable character-sketches of Mr. Burroughs's three famous companions.

Among the constantly increasing number of biographies, especial mention should be made of "Andrew Jackson," by G. W. Johnson. This is a "homespun biography," dwelling chiefly on Old Hickory's personal characteristics. When I was a lad in high school I read the late Professor W. G. Sumner's "Life of Jackson," in the excellent "American Statesmen" series. Mr. Sumner, being a financial expert, was interested chiefly in Jackson's quarrel with the Bank. He called his book "Andrew Jackson as a Public Man. Who he was, what chances he had, and what he did with them." Mr. Johnson is more interested in making a portrait of Jackson as a private man, and he succeeds very well indeed. It is a lively, entertaining narrative of a bizarre personality.

The two famous publishing houses of Doubleday, Page & Co. and George H. Doran & Co. have merged, taking the name Doubleday, Doran & Co. The first book published under the new name is Booth Tarkington's novel

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"Claire Ambler." A small, exquisitely bound edition was printed, each copy signed by F. N. (Effendi) Doubleday, George H. Doran, and Booth Tarkington. The paper is feather-weight, and it is as handsome a book as I have seen in some time. The novel itself, while not so good as "The Plutocrat," is one of its author's major works. It is of course continuously interesting, for I do not believe Booth Tarkington could write a dull book. If he only once would write a book both dull and dirty, he would receive much more applause from some of his critics; but he insists on being interesting, clever, and clean. As might be expected, there is much shrewd, humorous observation of the younger generation, male and female. The Italian episode goes deeper into life and human nature than many modern novels more pretentiously written.

The drama-critic of the New York *Herald Tribune*, Percy Hammond, has done what I hoped he would do. He has collected and revised some of his first-night criticisms, and published them in a volume called "But—Is It Art?" They make good reading, and provoke mental activity in the reader. Mr. Hammond is an honest, penetrating, and fearless critic. I read him faithfully day by day, and derive much profit. If I were to find any flaws in his work, I should point out the defect—as it seems to me—which is characteristic of practically all our American drama-critics. They write like "columnists." Instead of giving a straightforward criticism of the play and the acting, they cultivate an ironical mannerism which is often irritating. One feels that they are trying to score off the piece instead of interpreting it.

And I take this opportunity to repeat what I have said before. It seems to me unjust and often cruel that a play which may have cost its author years of hard labor, its presenter much thought and money, and its actors many rehearsals, should be judged by the critic in twenty minutes. Drama criticism should not be regarded only as news. It would be far better if, the morning after the first night, there should appear from the critic a news item giving a brief account of the play and an accurate report of its reception by the audience. Then in the Sunday issue or in some issue a few days later, there should appear a detailed critical essay.

What would be thought of the art of book-reviewing if every critic was obliged to print his review on the day after he received his copy of the book? Yet even so he would have an advantage over the drama-critic; for he would have the thing before him in permanent form.

If all criticisms must be printed the morning after the first night, then there should be an invitation performance preceding the first night, with a house full of guests. The difficulty with this would be that some drama-critic would feel it necessary to make a "scoop." Winthrop Ames used to open on Monday nights with an invitation performance on the preceding Saturday; some of the critics printed their reviews in the Sunday issue.

In Mr. Hammond's book, as distinguished from his daily reviews, there seems to be somewhat less persiflage and more serious thought. It is a mistake to suppose that only humorous gibes are interesting; nothing is so interesting as ideas.

"An American Saga," by Carl Jensen, is one more illustration of how much we Americans gain from our immigrants. This Norwegian passed

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through experiences that would have broken the body and soul of the average man. Indeed his survival is all but incredible. He won a college education by back-breaking and heart-breaking toil, and somehow or other managed to keep not only healthy but cheerful. This is an autobiography packed with adventures and is at the same time a contribution to social history.

Representing exactly the opposite kind of human existence is P. G. Wodehouse's "Carry On, Jeeves." The butler is always an appealing figure; everybody likes a play with a good butler in it. Mr. Wodehouse is a humorist of the first class, and in Jeeves the butler reaches an apotheosis (buffo). This is the best book by its author that I have read, with the single exception of "Leave It to Psmith." I read it on the train and laughed so much that I nearly fell out of the upper berth.

The "Oxford Book of American Verse," chosen and edited by Bliss Carman, is a handy volume of six hundred and eighty pages. It covers the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries. The standard poets are well represented, and among the recent ones are Henry A. Beers, Lilla Cabot Perry, Don Marquis, and others. The dates have not been brought up to date; some poets who are now in heaven are kept back on earth. I wish that he had included in this anthology the exquisite poem of William Alexander Percy:

OVERTONES

"I heard a bird at break of day
Sing from the autumn trees
A song so mystical and calm,
So full of certainties,
No man, I think, could listen long
Except upon his knees.
Yet this was but a simple bird,
Alone, among dead trees."

A fresh tribute to the Continental influence of James Fenimore Cooper is seen in a "Le Roman de Bas-de-Cuir: Etude sur Fenimore Cooper et son influence en France," by Margaret Murray Gibb, published by the Librairie Ancienne Honoré Champion, 5 Quai Malaquais, Paris. This is a valuable and important work.

Arthur Hinds was impressed by a statement in this column that the complete sayings of Jesus could be read in three hours. He has accordingly published a volume (through D. H. Pierpont & Co., of Williamsburg, Mass.) printed in clear type, and small enough to be carried in the upper vest pocket: "The Complete Sayings of Jesus. A Glowing Short-Story. From the King James Version of Christ's Own Words." This ought to have a wide circulation.

A book of extraordinary interest and value is "The Heart of Thoreau's Journals," edited by Odell Shepard. Naturally it does not equal its predecessor, "The Heart of Emerson's Journals," but it is a book to buy and to own and to read and reread. Every year sees the fame of Thoreau widening and brightening.

The completion of the New English Dictionary is a notable event. The last word is "Zyxt." The preparation of the dictionary has employed nearly 1,500 persons for over seventy years. It has resembled the building of a cathedral. The original architect, Sir James Murray, died some time ago, and his successor, Doctor Henry Bradley, who toiled at it for twenty-seven years, is also dead. It cost a large fortune to make it, and a small fortune to buy it, as I have the best of all reasons for knowing.

To those who do and who do not believe in the good old word "conver-

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sion," I recommend a book by the Reverend S. M. Shoemaker, called "Children of the Second Birth." It is a case-book.

Among the new novels many readers will find "The Old Nick," by F. W. Bronson, interesting. The presentation of a lonely widower and his contacts with the younger generation show considerable creative skill. The author is a young man, and this is his second book.

Two police novels I recommend. They are "The Bellamy Trial," by Frances N. Hart, and "A Mysterious Disappearance," from the experienced hand of Louis Tracy.

The recent death of Judge William Armistead Falconer, of Arkansas, is a loss to literature and polite learning as well as to his profession. His published translations of Cicero attracted international attention. As a teacher of law in the University of Arkansas he won the respect and affection of his students and colleagues.

The eminent novelist Anzia Yezierska writes me about her latest novel, "Arrogant Beggar":

In the village where I was born floated all sorts of fairy tales about America. My imagination was fired by a story of a Working Girls Home where girls are free to learn anything they wanted. Well, when I got here, this turned out to be a *school for servants*. Kind, rich ladies wanted to help immigrant girls by training them to be their cooks and waitresses. For years and years I kept making futile attempts writing up my experiences with these Big Sisters, these Saviours of the Working Girl. One day, I suddenly saw a scene, a public meeting of the trustees and board of directors where the poor girls who've been helped by the kind, rich ladies are taught to make speeches of gratitude. I imagined myself suddenly tearing up the prepared speech, daring to tell the saviours what I really felt. This is Chap. X in the book. After I worked out this scene, I wove a beginning and an end.

I wanted to call this book, Charity for the Rich, or Be Kind to the Rich. I feel the rich need charity and kindness more than the starving poor who come to them for help. Reality and all the vital experiences of life have been camouflaged for the rich by the glamour of their money. They never see how barren these places built with money are. The poor, the powerless, they are forced to stand still and feel and see and know that love is the only power. It's up to the poor who know to be kind to the rich. The trustees and board of directors who run these homes need charity and compassion more than the poor who are mistreated in them. God! what a lot of words —and nothing what I really feel. But I trust you will know what I'm trying to say.

Miss Helen C. Clark, of Harrisburg, Pa., sends a good head-line from the Harrisburg *Telegraph* about the comet:

COMET TO POSE HERE 5:30 P. M.

An instructor in the University of Michigan, on chewing tobacco:

In the Christmas SCRIBNER'S you quote from "The Tobacco-Chewers Protective and Educational League of America" in reference to Ibsen's clandestine tobacco-chewing. This recalled to me what an episcopal rector in Michigan (I dare not place it more precisely!) told me of an eminent visiting bishop from another section of the country. A moment or two before the sermon, the local rector observed the bishop quietly slip out into one of the back rooms. Thinking the bishop wished a glass of water, the solicitous rector followed the guest-bishop, and he found the bishop cutting a piece of chewing tobacco, to be in his cheek during the sermon he was about to deliver! The bishop explained that he never gave a sermon, if he could help it, without the sustaining aid of a piece of plug tobacco!

Professor P. M. Jack, from Aberdeen and Cambridge Universities, now chairman of the University of Michigan Rhetoric Department, told me the other day that he thought it likely that every important English man of letters smoked.

Browning never smoked, although he drank wine with meals. He never

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mixed wines; if he started with sherry, he stuck to sherry till the dessert. W. D. Howells not only never smoked, but the odor of tobacco affected him so evilly that he could not endure to be in a room where there was smoking. This fact shows how he loved Mark Twain, for, in order to enjoy his company, Mr. Howells actually followed him into the smoking-compartments of trains. This took more courage than Orpheus showed in following his wife into hell.

The Fano Club may yet attract the attention of Mussolini. Here is a letter from Nice, by Priscilla Lee:

What a mystery and charm about the Fano Club! Our friends both in America and Italy believe we are hiding something very important and exclusive.

Now a man in Fano is asked to write an Italian article about it for a magazine called the "Studio Picino." He would appreciate very much if you would send him this information:

1. The name of the Founder of the club and who is president.
2. The date the Fano Club was founded.
3. What is the reason it was started, and what is its object?
4. How many members are there at present?

I believe they imagine this Club is something *political*. Luzio, a member of it, cannot answer their questions!!!

I am writing him now, how we first heard of the Fano Club in your book, "As I Like It," and the later news we had of it in the SCRIBNER MAGAZINE.

Donald Wing, Yale 1926, enters the Fano Club by the post-card gate, writing: "With bare feet and tonsure I have made my pilgrimage to Fano, bribed a good father, and entered the sanctum chiuso. May I do further honour to you and to R. Browning. Letter follows."

My statement about the Big Four has drawn many interesting comments. Mr. Patrick Crowley, president of the New York Central Lines:

I was interested in reading your article in the January issue of SCRIBNER'S, with reference to the application of the name, "Big Four," to the Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago & St. Louis Railroad. Mr. George H. Ingalls, a son of Mr. M. E. Ingalls, who was President of the Big Four Railroad at the time that name was applied to it, is now a Vice President of the New York Central Lines, and I asked him to give me such information as he might have.

My dear Mr. Crowley:

As near as I can remember, and I have also checked it up, this was used to my personal knowledge prior to 1887, and I believe it really was first used around 1884 or 1885. The man who named the road "Big Four" was Mr. Harry Morehead, a broker of Cincinnati. My father always referred to the Cincinnati, Indianapolis, St. Louis and Chicago as the Kankakee Line and he favored that name, but the brokers preferred "Big Four," I presume because it was shorter. Then when the old Big Four and the Cleveland, Columbus, Cincinnati & Indianapolis were consolidated, the C. C. C. & I. was always known as the Bee Line, but after a good deal of argument and discussion the name Bee Line was dropped and "Big Four" was generally used.

Very truly yours, G. H. Ingalls.

From the Reverend Charles E. Cragg, of Huntington, Long Island:

I was interested in your enquiry as to the origin of the expression "The Big Four." John S. McGroarty in his most interesting volume "California, its history and romance" (page 293) says that the four men of Sacramento, who stood back of the tremendous enterprise of carrying the Central Pacific R.R. over the Sierras and into California in 1861 were popularly known by that title. They were Leland Stanford, C. R. Huntington, Mark Hopkins and Charles Crocker. How will that answer for an "origin"? At least it antedates the quartet of the Detroit Baseball Club.

From I. B. Woof, Toledo, Ohio:

In my opinion, although I do not profess to be an authority on the subject, the Big

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Four were known, not in the halcyon gold days of California, but "on the Comstock," and that they were Crocker, Flood, Mackey and Fair, names which I am sure you will instantly recognize or be able to recall.

From the shady past—I almost said a shady past—comes an impression so faint as to be quite diaphanous, that later there was a fifth member of the group, if it can be so called.

But what you wanted was the date as to when the term Big Four was first used. I surmise it was between 1865 and 1875.

From Mr. O. A. Gould, of New Bedford, Mass.:

When the late Tony Pastor's Variety Theatre was located near the old Metropolitan Hotel on Broadway near Spring, N. Y. C. probably in 1875-76 an act of the so called "knock-about" sort comprising 4 men was styled "The Big Four." It was a big attraction both in the metropolis and when touring with Mr. Pastor throughout the country. I am reasonably sure of two of the names—Smith and Waldron; the third name may have been Pettingill but I cannot summon successfully now from its crevice in memory the cognomen of the other member. As you know thousands of acts of four members now exist and have, since Variety merged into more or less polite Vaudeville. Perhaps Mr. Philip Hale of the Boston Herald, or Professor Geo. Edgar Oliver, Albany, N. Y., could supply more complete data.

From George Edgar Oliver, of Albany, N. Y.:

I am an old timer in the show business and have kept in touch with matters musical and theatrical for over fifty years.

I recall the act of the Big Four at Tony Pastor's, and the names are Smith, Waldron, Cronin, and Mister Martin. In order to check up on my memory, I called up an old show man who at one time was advance agent for Haverly's minstrels and Tony Pastor and he said that I was correct.

Did you know that at one time (about 1880) Lillian Russell was a member of the "Pinafore" chorus at Tony Pastor's Theatre on 14th Street?

From Philip Hale, of Boston, Mass.:

The "Big Four" in 1879 consisted of Smith, Waldron, Morton and Martin. In 1870—Smith, Allen, Morton and Martin. In 1898 (Haverly's minstrels)—Smith, Waldron, Pearley, and Martin. William Smith committed suicide in New York in 1900. Dan Waldron, born in New York, died at Washington, D. C., 1905, age 47 years. J. W. Morton, whose name was Sheppard, died in 1907. If Martin of the "Big Four" was Tom Martin (born in Boston in 1861; died at Brooklyn in 1901) he had been stage manager at Tony Pastor's in the late '80's—but I doubt if he was of the "Big Four." Dan Waldron's real name was McQuinny. He was the last of the original quartet.

The "Big Four" appeared chiefly in negro songs and dances.

P. S. Good Lord, how Yale has changed since I was graduated in '76!

THE F. Q. CLUB

From Charles Moore, of Washington, D. C.:

I think you must now have reached the end of the list of persons who have read all of the "Faery Queene." Perhaps I may bring up the rear by relating that I heard James Russell Lowell tell that he had met a man who *said* he had read through that poem. He did not give the man's name, and perhaps there was a shade of doubt in his tone.

This statement of Lowell's shows how important—yes, necessary—is our F. Q. Club.

Walter Karig, of Millburn, N. J.:

Add "funny places where candidates passed their novitiates." I read the F. Q. while soldiering in France and eastward; read it in snatches at the Y. M. C. A. library in Le Mans and finally when we moved away from the cognac sector I stole the book and finished it in trucks, abandoned cheese factories and Norman tonnelles.

A catalog of Y. M. C. A. library catalogs would be a literary achievement, and an illuminating side-light on the intellectual phases of the pretty war.

A. M. Ingold, cashier of the First National Bank of Morganton, N. C., writes:

Like yourself, I have never seen a male tortoise-shell cat. A recent issue of the Dear-

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born *Independent* mentioned that about one in every seven hundred tortoise-shells is a male.

From Harry Hansen, of the New York *World:*

I have just read your little note on the cat in German. No doubt the female now represents her kind as *die Katze*. But you do recall the important place occupied in all German folklore by *der Kater* from Kater Murr to Der gestiefelte Kater, the latter becoming our own inoffensive "Puss in Boots." Der Kater has a definite personality, not at all like that of our malodorous tomcat, yet when fairy tales in which he plays a part reach our children in translation he becomes simply *the cat* and our children usually imagine a female.

THE IGNOBLE PRIZE

F. F. Bartrop, of New York:

I suggest the expressions "equally as good," "equally as well," etc.

Also, why in his interesting article in the December SCRIBNER does Bishop Fiske use, in writing of his hypothetical popular young clergyman, the expression "society congregation"? True, the word society, used as an adjective has now a meaning, but is it not a vulgarism, and to be avoided by the self-respecting?

Sally H. Kemper, of Scranton, Pa.:

I should like to nominate the use of the noun *sense* as a verb: and the expression *well-groomed* applied to a human being. These things are like waving a red bull at me.

From Miss May L. Sheridan, of the Lincoln High School, Jersey City. After calling my attention to the use of the word "swound" in "The Ancient Mariner," she comments on the nomination of the noun "humans":

May I say that I should like to range myself with the librarian of Brown University with regard to the use of the word humans. Stevenson employs it in "An Inland Voyage." He says of the trembling sedges on the river side, that they are like poor humans in alarm.

Also, regarding an English equivalent of the German Mensch, is not the good English word *wight* an exact equivalent, and wights an equivalent of Menschen? Washington Irving employs the word wight in "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow": "a worthy wight of the name of Ichabod Crane."

As showing how difficult it is to obtain from any one witness conclusive testimony, I present the following letter from Mrs. E. L. Caton, of Orlando, Fla.:

If H. W. Fugate of Hansonville, Virginia, has lived in the south all his life and has never heard once the expression "you-all" addressed to one person, may I suggest that either he "come on along" a bit farther south or consult a good aurist.

I have lived in the south parts of two years only, and I hear it all the while. South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, Texas, to say nothing of Florida, use it almost daily.

I truly hope that "you all" believe my statement.

The Reverend Newall Wordsworth Whitman, of Pachaug, Conn., suggests that there ought to be in every modern court "trained jurymen, just as the lawyers and judges are trained and educated, so that the men who sit as jurymen are trained and paid to hold the job for life." This would be a good scheme if it could be carried out.

No writer ever had a better command of adjectives than Shakespeare; yet as a certain man knew how to be silent in five languages, so Shakespeare understood how to gain emphasis by omission. There is in all literature no more terrible accusation than the last words of Cordelia:

"Shall we not see these daughters and these sisters?"

To those who believe that this present age is particularly irreligious and

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wicked, I will give advice in two words: Read history.

This week I have entered upon the most dangerous year of my life, the Grand Climacteric. Last Monday I reached the age of 63. For many centuries thousands of people regarded 49 as a fairly perilous year, exceeded only by 63. Every man who safely attained 64 said "Ouf!" or its equivalent. Yet somehow I feel no terror, because, even so far ago as the seventeenth century, Sir Thomas Browne regarded the fear of the Grand Climacteric as superstitious. Listen to his words of wisdom:

And so perhaps hath it happened unto the number 7. and 9. which multiplyed into themselves doe make up 63, commonly esteemed the great Climactericall of our lives; for the dayes of men are usually cast up by septenaries, and every seventh yeare conceived to carry some altering character with it, either in the temper of body, minde, or both; but among all other, three are most remarkable, that is 7. times 7. or forty-nine, 9. times 9. or eighty-one, and 7. times 9. or the yeare of sixty-three; which is conceived to carry with it, the most considerable fatality, and consisting of both the other numbers was apprehended to comprise the vertue of either, is therefore expected and entertained with feare, and esteemed a favour of fate to pass it over; which notwithstanding many suspect but to be a Panick terrour, and men to feare they justly know not what; and for my owne part, to speak indifferently, I find no satisfaction, nor any sufficiency in the received grounds to establish a rationall feare.

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Some Old Masters Recently in New York

BY ROYAL CORTISSOZ

When the partisans of modernistic art want to be particularly mournful and bitter about the obstacles retarding the complete triumph of their cause they refer with scorn to the persistent vogue of "the old masters." The point is certainly well taken. Many of our collectors are incomprehensibly neglectful of the blessings of Picasso and Matisse, what time they devote themselves with ardor to such figures of the past as Chardin and Sir Joshua Reynolds, Rembrandt, Vermeer, and Van Dyck. I suppose it is to be deplored, but, for my own part, having an insatiable passion for merely beautiful things, I shamelessly observe the situation with an appreciative chuckle. If ever I had cause for this I have had it in the season of 1927-28, only half advanced as I write. In New York, within a few short weeks, I have seen here and there an extraordinary succession of old masters, one emphatically to confirm the hypothesis that the city has become the great art market of the world.

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The treasures come singly and in groups. In one instance of late they have borne in a particularly interesting manner upon the tradition of a specific master, Vermeer of Delft. The list of his works was sparse enough when Burger reconstructed it in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* in 1866. It was made still shorter by Van Zype, the modern authority, who a few years ago gave the artist just thirty-eight works. Then Hofstede de Groot identified the Head of a Young Boy which passed through the hands of the Duveens into Mr. J. S. Bache's collection; and later the same dealers obtained for Mr. Mellon a previously unknown Portrait of a Girl by Vermeer. It seemed unlikely that his *œuvre* would again be extended, but last summer an Englishman in Bremen, Captain H. R. Wright, called on Dr. Bode in Berlin with a new Vermeer, and the Duveens got that. It is The Lace Maker, a more intimate version of the subject to which Vermeer gave such glorious treatment in the famous Dentellière of the Louvre. It works once more the spell of the master's familiar harmony, yellow, white, and blue, against a pearly background, and in feeling it has a tenderness the painter did not always disclose. These things would seem to be enough for a time at least, yet as the present pages go to press the Wildensteins are bringing over a little Vermeer recently discovered at The Hague, again the profile of a young woman wearing a yellow bodice with white cuffs and seated in a chair of dark blue velvet. I confess a deep impatience to see it. Incidentally I wonder if in the long run all of the twenty-one Vermeers in the historic Amsterdam sale of 1696 may not be identified. We know most of them now, and these recurrent discoveries should ultimately clear up the whole matter. Meanwhile there is no doubt but that every student of Ver-

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meer must now take account of him in American collections.

While I am speaking of the art of the Low Countries I may appropriately turn from a great Dutchman to a great Fleming, and at this point I have in passing to touch upon the wondrous change which may sometimes be wrought by the judicious cleaning of a picture. When I visited the big Flemish Exhibition in London last winter one of the superb Van Dycks especially impressed me through the beauty of its color. It was the stately full-length, belonging to Lord Northbrook, of Queen Henrietta Maria standing on a step with the dwarf Sir Geoffrey Hudson beside her. In this painting the queen wears a dress of blue silk trimmed with gold braid. There are pink bows at her sleeves and there is a white plume in her large black hat. Alongside the fluted pillar behind her there falls a curtain of orange silk. Obviously a resplendent arrangement. But dirt and varnish had muted its splendor. I found it a thing of quietly shimmering beauty. Since then it has been acquired by the Duveens and cleaned for its introduction here. The blue dress fairly took my breath away, the brilliant modulations of tone in it being raised to a higher power. I wondered if Gainsborough perhaps had seen it in its pristine gorgeousness and had thereby been encouraged to make the perilous venture from which he emerged so triumphantly with The Blue Boy. This is a truly sumptuous Van Dyck. It illustrates him at the very peak of his courtly style.

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That style has had its day. It is unimaginable as a formula susceptible of adjustment to the carriage and movement of an epoch characterized by the nervous tension of our own. We are too hurrying, too restless, for the formality of the old régime. When Sargent dipped into the Georgian hypothesis in certain of his group portraits, he keyed it up, probably because he could not help himself, to the animation implicit in his day. Nevertheless, for the modern eye there is a special fascination in the serenity, if nothing else, that belongs to the portraits of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The Seligmanns imported a major example of this quality in the Richard Barwell and His Son which they exhibited late in December. It proved a remarkable souvenir of Sir Joshua's middle period, a portrait done in 1771, when under the pressure of Romney's competition his domination of the field was momentarily lessened. Over the painting of this secretary to Warren Hastings, seated at his desk in red coat, green waistcoat, and black breeches, with his little son in rose beside him, he had time to linger, and the solid execution enforces the fact. Every passage in the picture, from the Oriental rug on the floor to the gilded backs of the books on the library shelves and the strips of blue leather edging the latter, is significant of the devoted brushman, making his color scheme rich and fat, giving it an almost Dutch weight and depth. I rejoiced in all this, in Reynolds's deviation into painter's painting, but I rejoiced also in his handling of that formalism to which I have alluded. He painted the two Barwells with all his wonted poise and breeding; he stayed the academician and preserved that serenity of which I have spoken. But this time, as he would do now and then, he modified his academic rigor and painted simply a friendly human interior, leaving his figures not "on parade" but sympathetically discovered in an intimate, thoroughly do-

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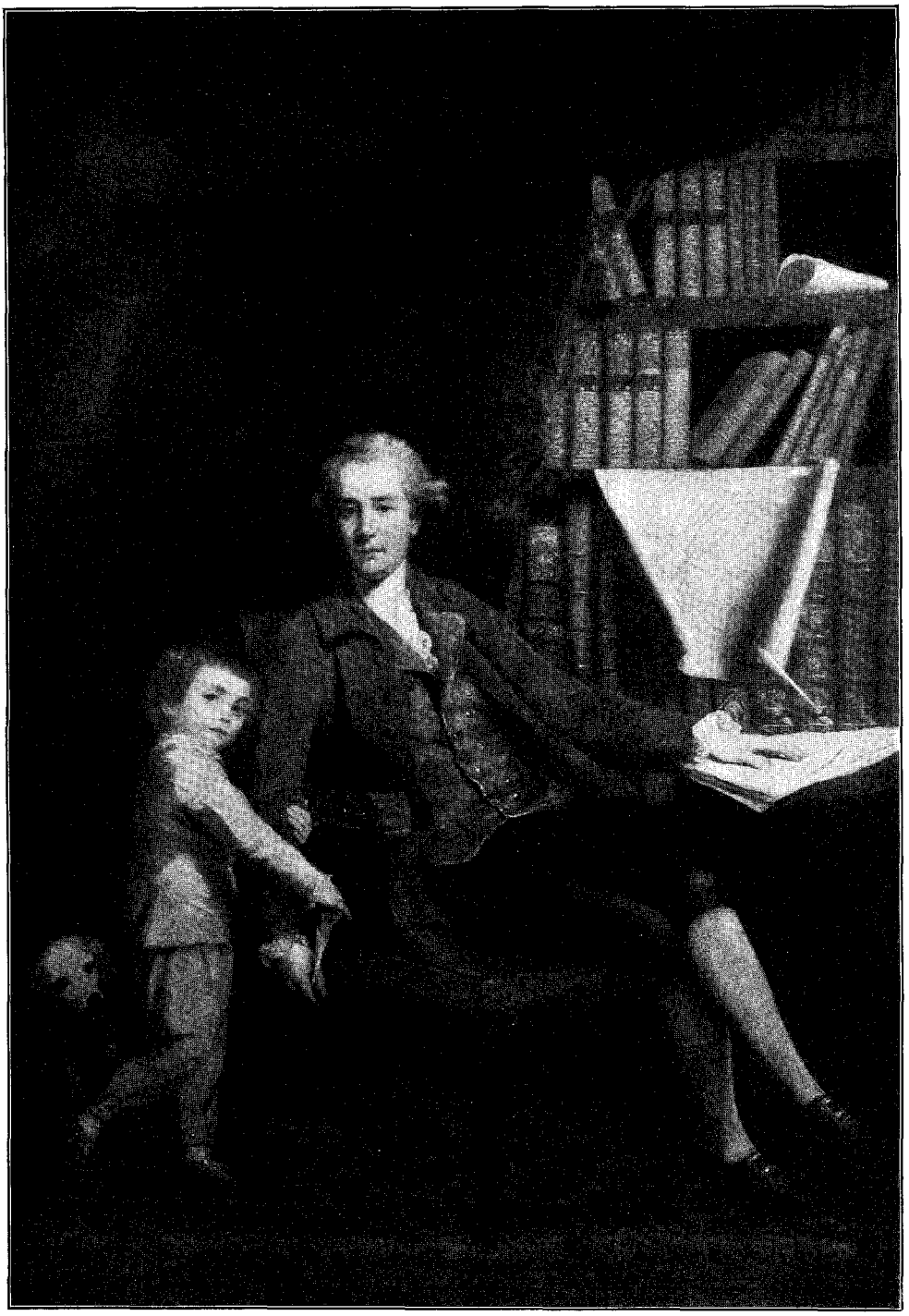

Richard Barwell and His Son.

From the painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds at the Seligmann Gallery.

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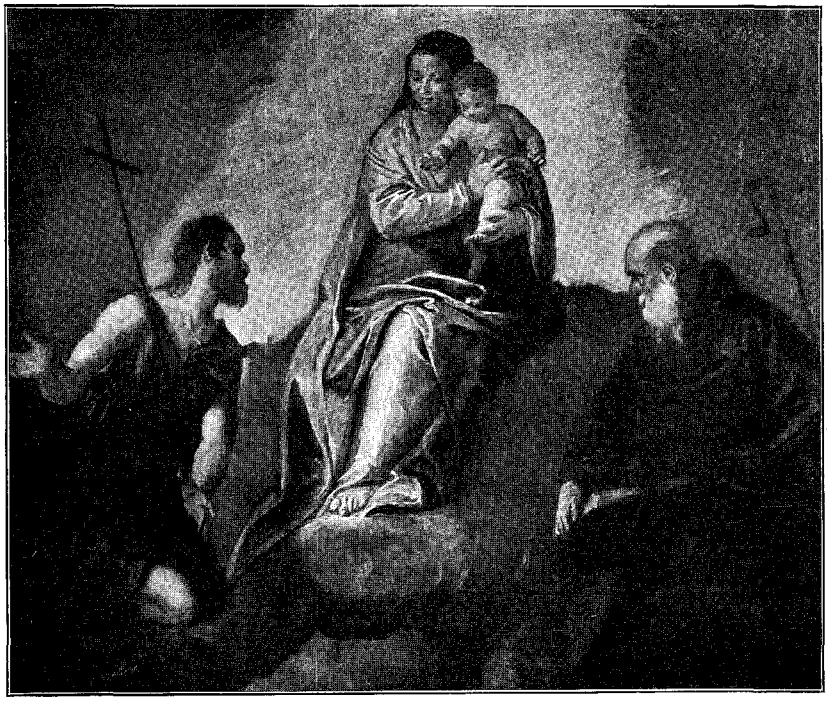
The Temptation.

From the painting by Duccio in the Frick Museum.



Madonna and Infant Saviour in Glory.

From the painting by Paolo Veronese at the Agnew Gallery.

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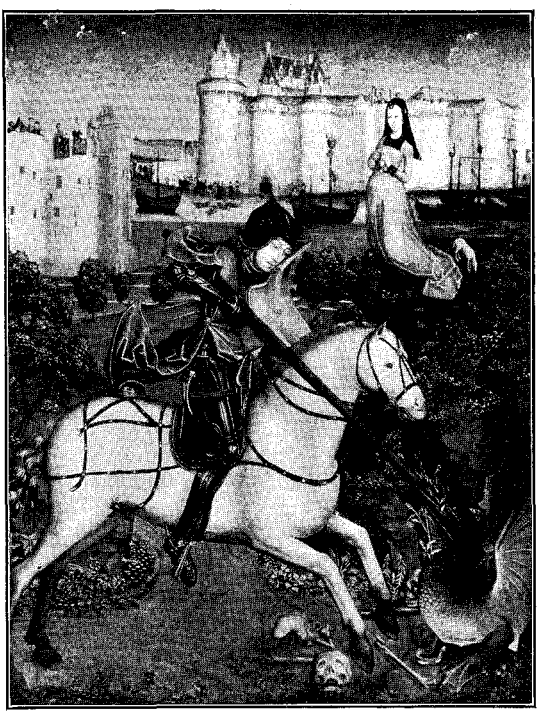

St. George and the Dragon.

From the painting by Simon Marmion at the Kleinberger Gallery.

Portrait of a Lady.

From the painting by the Master of Moulins at the Kleinberger Gallery.

Portrait of a Man.

From the painting by Fouquet at the Kleinberger Gallery.

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The Lace Maker.

From the painting by Vermeer at the Duveen Gallery.

Portrait of a Lady.

From the painting by Tiepolo at the Agnew Gallery.

Portrait of a Man.

From the painting by Bartolommeo Veneto at the Agnew Gallery.

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mestic mood. His sitters met him halfway as members of the social fabric of the period, but they remained themselves, personalities rather than courtly types.

At the same time that I saw this Reynolds I saw at the Higgs Gallery, in a group of portraits by several eighteenth-century British masters, no fewer than five examples of Sir Thomas Lawrence. One of them was of Sally Siddons, the tragedienne's daughter, with whom the painter was for a time in love. It was clever enough but comparatively negligible beside the other four canvases, all of them portraits of men. Before an arrogant Duke of York, painted with astonishing bravura, before an austere Cardinal Consalvi, and before a distinguished Lord Hobart, drawn and brushed in with equal sureness and celerity, one forgot for a little while the thin facility, the fashionable smirk, which so often are all that you get from Lawrence. He seemed more robust, more serious in substance than usual, and I wondered if the manliness of his subjects had not had something to do with it. I pondered anew also on the mystery of that preference amongst collectors for feminine portraits which apparently constitutes an immutable law. In æsthetic value the portraits of men are surely, in countless instances, among the masterpieces of the world.

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How stable, so to say, is the motive of portraiture amongst the old masters brought to New York! I have had to touch upon it again and again so far, and as I revert to my notes I find still other shining exemplars in the mass of material I have here briefly to record. There were some other noble things in the memorable exhibition of Venetian art organized this winter by the Agnews. I recall especially a monumental design by Paolo Veronese, a Madonna and Infant Saviour in Glory. Left unfinished by the master, there seemed to rest upon it in the perfect bloom of spontaneity, the purest personal accent of his genius, the very gesture of the man. In a sense this heroic canvas made the exhibition, but it was surrounded by beautiful things, and among them I would make bold to include a remarkable View of Rome by Guardi. History is silent as to any Roman adventures of his, and this lovely picture may have been no more than an imaginative improvisation. But it stays graciously in my mind. So does another eighteenth-century painting, Tiepolo's Portrait of a Lady, a work very rare for him. His customary *brio* was subordinated in this to a certain gravity in the type of luxurious beauty that he understood so well. There were some earlier portraits in this show that I cannot forget, a brilliant Portrait of a Man by Bartolommeo Veneto, out of the famous Holford collection, and some imposing things by Tintoretto, Paris Bordone, and Andrea Solario. Altogether an exhibition to be marked with a white stone in the annals of 1927-28.

The season, as I have indicated, has embraced most unusual incidents. Perhaps in sheer educational value the most important of them all was the loan exhibition of French Primitives organized by the Kleinbergers through October and November in aid of the French Hospital. About fourscore paintings were assembled from different American collections, with a few enamels and other objects of art. These pieces were of great intrinsic interest, and they had the added significance of throwing light upon a subject only recently

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brought into view. All through the nineteenth century, which witnessed such wide activity in the organization of art history and criticism, French Primitives were left in virtual obscurity. Then in 1904 a great exhibition in Paris brought them to the fore, and a generous portfolio of plates, with scholarly text by M. Bouchot, carried the topic for discussion everywhere. That discussion has not established the French Primitive on a plane with the Italian or even with the Flemish, by whom he was substantially influenced. But he enjoys to-day far greater prestige than formerly, and the Kleinberger show was invaluable as affording American students an opportunity to judge the subject for themselves. It made clear the limitations of the early Frenchmen in respect to spiritual fervor and their characteristically racial grip upon draftsmanship and the other elements of a polished technique. It brought back the traits of men who for most amateurs here are only legendary names, men in portraiture and religious painting like Jean Fouquet, Jean Malouel, Simon Marmion, the Master of Moulins, Jean Perreal, and Jean Bourdichon. The sequence was carried on, too, into the epoch of the Clouets and Corneille de Lyon. I could cheerfully exhaust all my space on this exhibition alone, and it is indeed difficult to abandon the theme. But I must be content with noting the singularity of the affair, its distinguished charm and its priceless character for purposes of study. The array of portraits was portentous. Those who saw the show must carry indelible memories of Fouquet and the Master of Moulins.

There remains to be cited an event which, like the exhibition of the French Primitives, requires pages by itself for its adequate commemoration. I refer to the arrival in this country of the Benson collection, purchased *en bloc* in London last summer by Sir Joseph Duveen. The one hundred and fourteen pictures have been brought over, little by little, in groups. The first group included the four famous Duccios which once belonged to the great "ancona" at Siena. One of them, the Temptation, immediately passed into the Frick collection. It is a small panel but it has monumental grandeur. Christ stands upon the mount repelling Satan in the face of all the kingdoms of the world, typified in walled towns. Ministering angels hover behind the divine figure in blue. The scene is set against a background of pure gold. The panel and its associates are renowned in the literature of art and in that they are representative of this collection. Mr. Benson had the judgment and the good fortune to procure positive jewels of the Sienese, Florentine, Umbrian, Milanese, and Venetian schools. His collection contains nothing less than masterpieces by Duccio, Piero di Cosimo, Andrea del Sarto, Signorelli, Crivelli, Antonello da Messina, Bellini, Titian, and Carpaccio —to name only a handful of the painters. And all this store of treasure is laid at a stroke at the doors of American collectors! Is it any wonder that the observer of these things is moved to surmise that the end is not yet? After the Benson-Duveen affair almost anything seems possible. Also I cannot help feeling that the cult of the old master in the United States is somehow fairly secure.

A calendar of current art exhibitions will be found in the Fifth Avenue Section.

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The Greene Murder Case

(Continued from page 332 of this number)

concealed so that our searchers didn't run across them?"

"As to that, now, I couldn't say. They may have been taken out of the house altogether."

There was a silence for several minutes. Then Markham spoke.

"The finding of the galoshes pretty well proves your theory, Vance. But do you realize what confronts us now? If your reasoning is correct, the guilty person is some one with whom we've been talking this morning. It's an appalling thought. I've gone over in my mind every member of that household; and I simply can't regard any one of them as a potential mass-murderer."

"Sheer moral prejudice, old dear." Vance's voice assumed a note of raillery. "I'm a bit cynical myself, and the only person at the Greene mansion I'd eliminate as a possibility would be Frau Mannheim. She's not sufficiently imaginative to have planned this accumulative massacre. But as regards the others, I could picture any one of 'em as being at the bottom of this diabolical slaughter. It's a mistaken idea, don't y' know, to imagine that a murderer looks like a murderer. No murderer ever does. The only people who really look like murderers are quite harmless. Do you recall the mild and handsome features of the Reverend Richeson of Cambridge? Yet he gave his inamorata cyanide of potassium. The fact that Major Armstrong was a meek and gentlemanly looking chap did not deter him from feeding arsenic to his wife. Professor Webster of Harvard was not a criminal type; but the dismembered spirit of Doctor Parkman doubtless regards him as a brutal slayer. Doctor Lamson, with his philanthropic eyes and his benevolent beard, was highly regarded as a humanitarian; but he administered aconitine rather cold-bloodedly to his crippled brother-in-law. Then there was Doctor Neil Cream, who might easily have been mistaken for the deacon of a fashionable church; and the soft-spoken and amiable Doctor Waite. . . . And the women! Edith Thompson admitted putting powdered glass in her husband's gruel, though she looked like a pious Sunday-school teacher. Madeleine Smith certainly had a most respectable countenance. And Constance Kent was rather a beauty—a nice girl with an engaging air; yet she cut her little brother's throat in a thoroughly brutal manner. Gabrielle Bompard and Marie Boyer were anything but typical of the *donna delinquente*; but the one strangled her lover with the cord of her dressing-gown, and the other killed her mother with a cheese-knife. And what of Madame Fenayrou——?"

"Enough!" protested Markham. "Your lecture on criminal physiognomy can go over a while. Just now I'm trying to adjust my mind to the staggering inferences to be drawn from your finding of those galoshes." A sense of horror seemed to weigh him down. "Good God, Vance! There must be some way out of this nightmare you've propounded. What member of that household could possibly have walked in on Rex Greene and shot him down in broad daylight?"

" 'Pon my soul, I don't know." Vance himself was deeply affected by the sinister aspects of the case. "But some one in that house did it—some one the others don't suspect."

"That look on Julia's face, and Chester's amazed expression—that's what you mean, isn't it? They didn't suspect either. And they were horrified at the revelation—when it was too late. Yes, all those things fit in with your theory."

"But there's one thing that doesn't fit, old man." Vance gazed at the table perplexedly. "Rex died peacefully, apparently unaware of his murderer. Why wasn't there also a look of horror on his face? His eyes couldn't have been shut when the revolver was levelled at him, for he was standing, facing the intruder. It's inexplicable—mad!"

He beat a nervous tattoo on the table, his brows contracted.

"And there's another thing, Markham, that's incomprehensible about Rex's death. His door into the hall was open; but nobody up-stairs heard the shot—nobody *up-stairs*. And yet Sproot—who was down-stairs, in the butler's pantry behind the dining-room—heard it distinctly."

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"It probably just happened that way," Markham argued, almost automatically. "Sound acts fantastically sometimes."

Vance shook his head.

"Nothing has 'just happened' in this case. There's a terrible logic about everything—a carefully planned reason behind each detail. Nothing has been left to chance. Still, this very systematization of the crime will eventually prove the murderer's downfall. When we can find a key to any one of the anterooms, we'll know our way into the main chamber of horrors."

At that moment Markham was summoned to the telephone. When he returned his expression was puzzled and uneasy.

"It was Swacker. Von Blon is at my office now—he has something to tell me."

"Ah! Very interestin'," commented Vance.

We drove to the District Attorney's office, and Von Blon was shown in at once.

"I may be stirring up a mare's nest," he began apologetically, after he had seated himself on the edge of a chair. "But I felt I ought to inform you of a curious thing that happened to me this morning. At first I thought I would tell the police, but it occurred to me they might misunderstand; and I decided to place the matter before you to act upon as you saw fit."

Plainly he was uncertain as to how the subject should be broached, and Markham waited patiently with an air of polite indulgence.

"I phoned the Greene house as soon as I made the—ah—discovery," Von Blon went on hesitantly. "But I was informed you had left for the office; so, as soon as I had lunched, I came directly here."

"Very good of you, doctor," murmured Markham.

Again Von Blon hesitated, and his manner became exaggeratedly ingratiating.

"The fact is, Mr. Markham, I am in the habit of carrying a rather full supply of emergency drugs in my medicine-case. . . ."

"Emergency drugs?"

"Strychnine, morphine, caffeine, and a variety of hypnotics and stimulants. I find it often convenient——"

"And it was in connection with these drugs you wished to see me?"

"Indirectly—yes." Von Blon paused momentarily to arrange his words. "To-day it happened that I had in my case a fresh tube of soluble quarter-grain morphine tablets, and a Parke-Davis carton of four tubes of strychnine—thirtieths. . . ."

"And what about this supply of drugs, doctor?"

"The fact is, the morphine and the strychnine have disappeared."

Markham bent forward, his eyes curiously animated.

"They were in my case this morning when I left my office," Von Blon explained; "and I made only two brief calls before I went to the Greenes'. I missed the tubes when I returned to my office."

Markham studied the doctor a moment.

"And you think it improbable that the drugs were taken from your case during either of your other calls?"

"That's just it. At neither place was the case out of my sight for a moment."

"And at the Greenes'?" Markham's agitation was growing rapidly.

"I went directly to Mrs. Greene's room, taking the case with me. I remained there for perhaps half an hour. When I came out——"

"You did not leave the room during that half-hour?"

"No. . . ."

"Pardon me, doctor," came Vance's indolent voice; "but the nurse mentioned that you called to her to bring Mrs. Greene's bouillon. From where did you call?"

Von Blon nodded. "Ah, yes. I did speak to Miss Craven. I stepped to the door and called up the servants' stairs."

"Quite so. And then?"

"I waited with Mrs. Greene until the nurse came. Then I went across the hall to Sibella's room."

"And your case?" interjected Markham.

"I set it down in the hall, against the rear railing of the main stairway."

"And you remained in Miss Sibella's room until Sproot called you?"

"That is right."

"Then the case was unguarded in the rear of the upper hall from about eleven until you left the house?"

"Yes. After I had taken leave of you gentlemen in the drawing-room I went up-stairs and got it."

"And also made your adieus to Miss Sibella," added Vance.

Von Blon raised his eyebrows with an air of gentle surprise.

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"Naturally."

"What amount of these drugs disappeared?" asked Markham.

"The four tubes of strychnine contained in all approximately three grains—three and one-third, to be exact. And there are twenty-five tablets of morphine in a Parke-Davis tube, making six and one-quarter grains."

"Are those fatal doses, doctor?"

"That's a difficult question to answer, sir." Von Blon adopted a professorial manner. "One may have a tolerance for morphine and be capable of assimilating astonishingly large doses. But, *ceteris paribus*, six grains would certainly prove fatal. Regarding strychnine, toxicology gives us a very wide range as to lethal dosage, depending on the condition and age of the patient. The average fatal dose for an adult is, I should say, two grains, though death has resulted from administrations of one grain, or even less. And, on the other hand, recovery has taken place after as much as ten grains have been swallowed. Generally speaking, however, three and one-third grains would be sufficient to produce fatal results."

When Von Blon had gone Markham gazed at Vance anxiously.

"What do you make of it?" he asked.

"I don't like it—I don't at all like it." Vance shook his head despairingly. "It's dashed queer—the whole thing. And the doctor is worried, too. There's a panic raging beneath his elegant façade. He's in a blue funk—and it's not because of the loss of his pills. He fears something, Markham. There was a strained, hunted look in his eyes."

"Doesn't it strike you as strange that he should be carrying such quantities of drugs about with him?"

"Not necessarily. Some doctors do it. The Continental M.D.s especially are addicted to the practice. And don't forget Von Blon is German-trained. . . ." Vance glanced up suddenly. "By the by, what about those two wills?"

There was a look of astonished interrogation in Markham's incisive stare, but he said merely:

"I'll have them later this afternoon. Buckway has been laid up with a cold, but he promised to send me copies to-day."

Vance got to his feet.

"I'm no Chaldean," he drawled; "but I have an idea those two wills may help us to understand the disappearance of the doctor's pellets." He drew on his coat and took up his hat and stick. "And now I'm going to banish this beastly affair from my thoughts. —Come, Van. There's some good chamber-music at Æolian Hall this afternoon, and if we hurry we'll be in time for the Mozart '*C-major.*' "

XVII

THE TWO WILLS

(Tuesday, November 30; 8 p. m.)

Eight o'clock that night found Inspector Moran, Sergeant Heath, Markham, Vance, and me seated about a small conference-table in one of the Stuyvesant Club's private rooms. The evening papers had created a furore in the city with their melodramatic accounts of Rex Greene's murder; and these early stories were, as we all knew, but the mild forerunners of what the morning journals would publish. The situation itself, without the inevitable impending strictures of the press, was sufficient to harry and depress those in charge of the official investigation; and, as I looked round the little circle of worried faces that night, I realized the tremendous importance that attached to the outcome of our conference.

Markham was the first to speak.

"I have brought copies of the wills; but before we discuss them I'd like to know if there have been any new developments."

"Developments!" Heath snorted contemptuously. "We've been going round in a circle all afternoon, and the faster we went the quicker we got to where we started. Mr. Markham, not one damn thing turned up to give us a line of inquiry. If it wasn't for the fact that no gun was found in the room, I'd turn in a report of suicide and then resign from the force."

"Fie on you, Sergeant!" Vance made a half-hearted attempt at levity. "It's a bit too early to give way to such gloomy pessimism.—I take it that Captain Dubois found no finger-prints."

"Oh, he found finger-prints, all right—Ada's, and Rex's, and Sproot's, and a couple of the doctor's. But that don't get us anywheres."

"Where were the prints?"

"Everywhere—on the door-knobs, the centre-table, the window-panes; some were even found on the woodwork above the mantel."

"That last fact may prove interestin' some day, though it doesn't seem to mean much

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just now.—Anything more about the footprints?"

"Nope. I got Jerym's report late this afternoon; but it don't say anything new. The galoshes you found made the tracks."

"That reminds me, Sergeant. What did you do with the galoshes?"

Heath gave him a sly, exultant grin.

"Just exactly what you'd have done with 'em, Mr. Vance. Only—I thought of it first."

Vance smiled back.

"*Salve*! Yes, the idea entirely slipped my mind this morning. In fact, it only just occurred to me."

"May I know what was done with the galoshes?" interjected Markham impatiently.

"Why, the Sergeant returned them surreptitiously to the linen-closet, and placed them under the drugget whence they came."

"Right!" Heath nodded with satisfaction. "And I've got our new nurse keeping an eye on 'em. The minute they disappear she's to phone the Bureau."

"You had no trouble installing your woman?" asked Markham.

"A cinch. Everything went like clockwork. At a quarter to six the doc shows up; then at six comes the woman from the Central Office. After the doc has put her wise to her new duties, she gets into her uniform and goes in to Mrs. Greene. The old lady tells the doc she didn't like this Miss Craven anyway, and hopes the new nurse will show her more consideration. Things couldn't have gone smoother. I hung around until I got a chance to tip our woman off about the galoshes; then I came away."

"Which of our women did you give the case to, Sergeant?" Moran asked.

"O'Brien—the one who handled the Sitwell affair. Nothing in that house will get by O'Brien; and she's as strong as a man."

"There's another thing you'd better speak to her about as soon as possible." And Markham related in detail the facts of Von Blon's visit to the office after lunch. "If those drugs were stolen in the Greene mansion, your woman may be able to find some trace of them."

Markham's account of the missing poisons had produced a profound effect on both Heath and the Inspector.

"Good heavens!" exclaimed the latter. "Is this affair going to develop into a poisoning case? It would be the finishing touch." His apprehension went much deeper than his tone implied.

Heath sat staring at the polished table-top with futile consternation.

"Morphine and strychnine! There's no use looking for the stuff. There's a hundred places in the house where it could be hid; and we might search a month and not find it. Anyway, I'll go out there to-night and tell O'Brien to watch for it. If she's on the lookout she maybe can spot any attempt to use it."

"What astounds me," remarked the Inspector, "is the security felt by the thief. Within an hour of the time Rex Greene is shot the poison disappears from the upper hall. Good gad! That's cold-bloodedness for you! And nerve, too!"

"There's plenty of cold-bloodedness and nerve in this case," answered Vance. "A relentless determination is back of these murders—and calculation no end. I wouldn't be surprised if the doctor's satchel had been searched a score of times before. Perhaps there's been a patient accumulation of the drugs. This morning's theft may have been the final raid. I see in this whole affair a carefully worked-out plot that's been in preparation perhaps for years. We're dealing with the persistency of an *idée fixe*, and with the demoniacal logic of insanity. And—what is even more hideous—we're confronted with the perverted imagination of a fantastically romantic mind. We're pitted against a fiery, egocentric, hallucinated optimism. And this type of optimism has tremendous stamina and power. The history of nations has been convulsed by it. Mohammed, Bruno, and Jeanne d'Arc—as well as Torquemada, Agrippina, and Robespierre—all had it. It operates in different degrees, and to different ends; but the spirit of individual revolution is at the bottom of it."

"Hell, Mr. Vance!" Heath was uneasy. "You're trying to make this case something that ain't—well, natural."

"Can you make it anything else, Sergeant? Already there have been three murders and an attempted murder. And now comes the theft of the poisons from Von Blon."

Inspector Moran drew himself up and rested his elbows on the table.

"Well, what's to be done? That, I believe, is the business of to-night's conclave." He forced himself to speak with matter-of-factness. "We can't break up the establishment;

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and we can't assign a separate bodyguard for each remaining member of the household."

"No; and we can't give 'em the works at the police station, either," grumbled Heath.

"It wouldn't help you if you could, Sergeant," said Vance. "There's no third degree known that could unseal the lips of the person who is executing this particular *opus*. There's too much fanaticism and martyrdom in it."

"Suppose we hear those wills, Mr. Markham," suggested Moran. "We may then be able to figure out a motive.—You'll admit, won't you, Mr. Vance, that there's a pretty strong motive back of these killings?"

"There can be no doubt as to that. But I don't believe it's money. Money may enter into it—and probably does—but only as a contribut'ry factor. I'd say the motive was more fundamental—that it had its matrix in some powerful but suppressed human passion. However, the financial conditions may lead us to those depths."

Markham had taken from his pocket several legal-sized sheets of closely typed paper, and smoothed them on the table before him.

"There's no necessity to read these *verbatim*," he said. "I've gone over them thoroughly and can tell you briefly what they contain." He took up the top sheet and held it nearer to the light. "Tobias Greene's last will, drawn up less than a year before his death, makes the entire family, as you know, the residuary devisees, with the stipulation that they live on the estate and maintain it intact for twenty-five years. At the end of that time the property may be sold or otherwise disposed of. I might mention that the domiciliary stipulation was particularly strict: the legatees must live in the Greene mansion *in esse*—no technicality will suffice. They are permitted to travel and make visits; but such absences may not exceed three months in each respective year. . . ."

"What provision was made in case one of them should marry?" asked the Inspector.

"None. Even marriage on the part of any of the legatees did not vitiate the restrictions of the will. If a Greene married, he or she had to live out the twenty-five years on the estate just the same. The husband or wife could share the residence, of course. In event of children the will provided for the erection of two other small dwellings on the 52d Street side of the lot. Only one exception was made to these stipulations. If Ada should marry, she could live elsewhere without losing her inheritance, as she apparently was not Tobias's own child and could not, therefore, carry on the blood line of the Greenes."

"What penalties attached to a breaking of the domiciliary terms of the will?" Again the Inspector put the question.

"Only one penalty—disinheritance, complete and absolute."

"A rigid old bird," murmured Vance. "But the important thing about the will is, I should say, the manner in which he left the money. How was this distributed?"

"It wasn't distributed. With the exception of a few minor bequests, it was left in its entirety to the widow. She was to have the use of it during her lifetime, and could, at her death, dispose of it to the children—and grandchildren, if any—as she saw fit. It was imperative, however, that it all remain in the family."

"Where do the present generation of Greenes get their living expenses? Are they dependent on the old lady's bounty?"

"Not exactly. A provision was made for them in this way: each of the five children was to receive from the executors a stipulated amount from Mrs. Greene's income, sufficient for personal needs." Markham folded up the paper. "And that about covers Tobias's will."

"You spoke of a few minor bequests," said Vance. "What were they?"

"Sproot was left a competency, for instance —enough to take care of him comfortably whenever he wished to retire from service. Mrs. Mannheim, also, was to receive an income for life beginning at the end of the twenty-five years."

"Ah! Now, that's most interestin'. And in the meantime she could, if she chose, remain as cook at a liberal salary."

"Yes, that was the arrangement."

"The status of Frau Mannheim fascinates me. I have a feeling that some day ere long she and I will have a heart-to-heart talk.—Any other minor bequests?"

"A hospital, where Tobias recovered from typhus fever contracted in the tropics; and a donation to the chair of criminology at the University of Prague. I might mention too, as a curious item, that Tobias left his library to the New York Police Department, to be turned over to them at the expiration of the twenty-five years."

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Vance drew himself up with puzzled interest.

"Amazin'!"

Heath had turned to the Inspector.

"Did you know anything about this, sir?"

"It seems to me I've heard of it. But a gift of books a quarter of a century in the future isn't apt to excite the officials of the force."

Vance, to all appearances, was smoking with indolent unconcern; but the precise way he held his cigarette told me that some unusual speculation was absorbing his mind.

"The will of Mrs. Greene," Markham went on, "touches more definitely on present conditions, though personally I see nothing helpful in it. She has been mathematically impartial in doling out the estate. The five children—Julia, Chester, Sibella, Rex, and Ada—receive equal amounts under its terms—that is, each gets a fifth of the entire estate."

"That part of it don't interest me," put in the Sergeant. "What I want to know is, who gets all this money in case the others pass outa the picture?"

"The provision covering that point is quite simple," explained Markham. "Should any of the children die before a new will is drawn, their share of the inheritance is distributed equally among the remaining beneficiaries."

"Then when any one of 'em passes out, all the others benefit. And if all of 'em, except one, should die, that one would get everything—huh?"

"Yes."

"So, as it stands now, Sibella and Ada would get everything—fifty-fifty—provided the old lady croaked."

"That's correct, Sergeant."

"But suppose both Sibella and Ada, as well as the old lady, should die: what would become of the money?"

"If either of the girls had a husband, the estate would pass to him. But, in event of Sibella and Ada dying single, everything would go to the State. That is to say, the State would get it provided there were no relatives alive—which I believe is the case."

Heath pondered these possibilities for several minutes.

"I can't see anything in the situation to give us a lead," he lamented. "Everybody benefits equally by what's already happened. And there's three of the family still left—the old lady and the two girls."

"Two from three leaves one, Sergeant," suggested Vance quietly.

"What do you mean by that, sir?"

"The morphine and the strychnine."

Heath gave a start and made an ugly face.

"By God!" He struck the table with his fist. "It ain't coming to that if I can stop it!" Then a sense of helplessness tempered his outraged resolution, and he became sullen.

"I know how you feel." Vance spoke with troubled discouragement. "But I'm afraid we'll all have to wait. If the Greene millions are an actuating force in this affair, there's no way on earth to avert at least one more tragedy."

"We might put the matter up to the two girls and perhaps induce them to separate and go away," ventured the Inspector.

"That would only postpone the inevitable," Vance returned. "And, besides, it would rob them of their patrimony."

"A court ruling might be obtained upsetting the provisions of the will," submitted Markham dubiously.

Vance gave him an ironical smile.

"By the time you could get one of your beloved courts to act the murderer would have had time to wipe out the entire local judiciary."

For nearly two hours ways and means of dealing with the case were discussed; but obstacles confronted nearly every line of activity advocated. Finally it was agreed that the only practicable tactics to be pursued were those of the routine police procedure. However, before the conference broke up, certain specific decisions had been taken. The guard about the Greene estate was to be increased, and a man was to be placed on the upper floor of the Narcoss Flats to keep a close watch on the front door and windows. On some pretext or other a detective was to be kept inside of the house as many hours as possible during the day; and the telephone-line of the Greenes was to be tapped.

Vance insisted, somewhat against Markham's inclination, that every one in the house and every person who called there—however seemingly remote his connection with the case—should be regarded as a suspect and watched vigilantly; and Heath was ordered by the Inspector to convey this decision to O'Brien, lest her instinctive partiality should result in the relaxation of her scrutiny of certain persons. The Sergeant, it seemed, had al-

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ready instituted a thorough investigation into the private affairs of Julia, Chester, and Rex; and a dozen men were at work on their associates and activities outside of the Greene mansion, with special instructions to gather reports of conversations which might have contained some hint or reference indicating a foreknowledge or suspicion of the crimes.

Just as Markham rose to terminate the discussion Vance again leaned forward and spoke.

"In case there is to be a poisoning we should, I think, be prepared. Where overdoses of either morphine or strychnine are administered immediate action will sometimes save the victim. I would suggest that an official physician be placed in the Narcoss Flats with the man set to watch the Greene windows; and he should have at hand all the necess'ry apparatus and antidotes used in combating morphine and strychnine poisoning. Furthermore, I would suggest that we arrange some sort of signal with Sproot and the new nurse, so that, should anything happen, our doctor can be summoned without a moment's delay. If the victim of the attempted poisoning were saved, we might be able to ascertain who administered the drug."

The plan was readily agreed to. The Inspector took it upon himself to arrange the matter that night with one of the official police surgeons; and Heath went at once to the Narcoss Flats to secure a room facing the Greene mansion.

XVIII

IN THE LOCKED LIBRARY

(Wednesday, December 1; 1 p. m.)

Vance, contrary to his custom, rose early the next morning. He was rather waspish, and I left him severely alone. He made several desultory attempts at reading, and once, when he put his book down, I glanced at the title,—he had chosen a life of Genghis Khan! Later in the forenoon he attempted to busy himself with cataloguing his Chinese prints.

We were to have lunch with Markham at the Lawyers Club at one o'clock, and at a little after twelve Vance ordered his powerful Hispano-Suiza. He always drove himself when engaged on a problem: the activity seemed to steady his nerves and clarify his brain.

Markham was waiting for us, and it was only too plain from his expression that something of a disturbing nature had occurred.

"Unburden, old dear," invited Vance, when we were seated at our table in a corner of the main dining-room. "You look as serious as Saint John of Patmos. I'm sure something wholly to be expected has happened. Have the galoshes disappeared?"

Markham looked at him with some wonder.

"Yes! The O'Brien woman called the Bureau at nine o'clock this morning and reported that they had been removed from the linen-closet during the night. They were there, however, when she went to bed."

"And, of course, they have not been found."

"No. She made a pretty careful search before phoning."

"Fancy that. But she might have saved herself the trouble.—What does the doughty Sergeant opine?"

"Heath reached the house before ten o'clock, and made an investigation. But he learned nothing. No one admitted hearing any sound in the hall during the night. He researched the house himself, but without result."

"Have you heard from Von Blon this morning?"

"No; but Heath saw him. He came to the house about ten and stayed nearly an hour. He appeared very much upset over the stolen drugs, and immediately asked if any trace of them had been found. He spent most of the hour with Sibella."

"Ah, welladay! Let us enjoy our *truffes gastronome* without the intrusion of unpleasant speculations. This Madeira sauce, by the by, is very good." Thus Vance dismissed the subject.

However, that luncheon was to prove a memorable one; for toward the end of the meal Vance made a suggestion—or, rather, insisted upon an action—that was eventually to solve and explain the terrible tragedies at the Greene mansion. We had reached our dessert when, after a long silence, he looked up at Markham and said:

"The Pandora complex has seized and mastered me. I simply must get into Tobias's locked library. That sacred adytum has begun to infest my slumbers; and ever since you mentioned the legacy of those books I've had no rest. I yearn to become acquainted with

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Tobias's literary taste, and to learn why he should have selected the police for his beneficiaries."

"But, my dear Vance, what possible connection——?"

"Desist! You can't think of a question I have not already put to myself; and I'm unable to answer any of them. But the fact remains, I must inspect that library even if you have to get a judicial order to batter down the door. There are sinister undercurrents in that old house, Markham; and a hint or two may be found in that secret room."

"It will be a difficult proceeding if Mrs. Greene stands firm on her refusal to deliver the key to us." Markham, I could see, had already acquiesced. He was in a mood to accede to any suggestion that even remotely promised a clarification of the problem posed by the Greene murders.

It was nearly three o'clock when we reached the house. Heath had already arrived, in answer to a telephone call from Markham; and we at once presented ourselves to Mrs. Greene. Following an ocular sign from the Sergeant the new nurse left the room; and Markham went directly to the point. The old lady had eyed us suspiciously as we came in, and now sat rigidly against her pile of pillows, her gaze fixed on Markham with defensive animosity.

"Madam," he began, somewhat severely, "we regret the necessity of this call. But certain things have arisen which make it imperative that we visit Mr. Greene's library. . . ."

"You sha'n't!" she broke in, her voice rising in an infuriated *crescendo*. "You sha'n't put your foot in that room! Not for twelve years has any one passed the threshold, and no policeman now shall desecrate the place where my husband spent the last years of his life."

"I appreciate the sentiment that actuates your refusal," replied Markham; "but graver considerations have intervened. The room will have to be searched."

"Not if you kill me!" she cried. "How dare you force your way into my house——?"

Markham held up his hand authoritatively. "I am not here to argue the matter. I came to you merely to ask for the key. Of course, if you prefer to have us break down the door . . ." He drew a sheaf of papers from his pocket. "I have secured a search-warrant for that room; and it would cause me deep regret to have to serve it on you." (I was amazed at his aggressive daring, for I knew he had no warrant.)

Mrs. Greene broke forth with imprecations. Her anger became almost insensate, and she was changed into a creature at once repulsive and pitiful. Markham waited calmly for her paroxysm of fury to pass; and when, her vituperation spent, she beheld his quiet, inexorable bearing, she knew that she had lost. She sank back, white and exhausted.

"Take the key," she capitulated bitterly, "and save me the final infamy of having my house torn down by ruffians. . . . It's in the ivory jewel-case in the top drawer of that cabinet." She pointed weakly to the lacquered high-boy.

Vance crossed the room and secured the key—a long, old-fashioned instrument with a double bit and a filigreed bow.

"Have you always kept the key in this jewel-case, Mrs. Greene?" he asked, as he closed the drawer.

"For twelve years," she whined. "And now, after all that time, it is to be taken from me by force—and by the police, the very people who should be protecting an old, helpless paralytic like me. It's infamy! But what can I expect? Every one takes delight in torturing me."

Markham, his object gained, became contrite, and endeavored to pacify her by explaining the seriousness of the situation. But in this he failed; and a few moments later he joined us in the hall.

"I don't like this sort of thing, Vance," he said.

"You did remarkably well, however. If I hadn't been with you since lunch I'd have believed you really had a search-warrant. You are a veritable Machiavelli. *Te saluto*!"

"Get on with your business, now that you have the key," ordered Markham irritably. And we descended to the main hall.

Vance looked about him cautiously to make sure we were not observed, and led the way to the library.

"The lock works rather easily, considering its twelve years of desuetude," he remarked, as he turned the key and gently pushed open the massive oak door. "And the hinges don't even creak. Astonishin'."

Blackness confronted us, and Vance struck a match.

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"Please don't touch anything," he admonished, and, holding the match high before him, he crossed to the heavy velour draperies of the east window. As he drew them apart a cloud of dust filled the air.

"These curtains, at least, have not been touched for years," he said.

The gray light of mid-afternoon suffused the room, revealing an astonishing retreat. The walls were lined with open book-shelves which reached from the floor nearly to the ceiling, leaving only space enough for a row of marble busts and squat bronze vases. At the southern end of the room was a massive flat-topped desk, and in the centre stood a long carved table laden with curious and outlandish ornaments. Beneath the windows and in the corners were piles of pamphlets and portfolios; and along the moulding of the bookcases hung gargoyles and old prints yellow with age. Two enormous Persian lamps of perforated brass depended from the ceiling, and beside the centre-table stood a Chinese sconce eight feet high. The floor was covered with overlapping Oriental rugs laid at all angles; and at each end of the fireplace was a hideous, painted totem-pole reaching to the beams. A thick coating of dust overlay everything.

Vance returned to the door and, striking another match, closely examined the inner knob.

"Some one," he announced, "has been here recently. There's no sign of dust on this knob."

"We might get the finger-prints," suggested Heath.

Vance shook his head.

"Not even worth trying. The person we're dealing with knows better than to leave sign manuals."

He closed the door softly and threw the bolt. Then he looked about him. Presently he pointed beneath a huge geographical globe beside the desk.

"There are your galoshes, Sergeant. I thought they'd be here."

Heath almost threw himself upon them, and carried them to the window.

"They're the ones, all right," he declared.

Markham gave Vance one of his annoyed, calculating stares.

"You've got some theory," he asserted, in an accusing tone.

"Nothing more than I've already told you. The finding of the galoshes was wholly incidental. I'm interested in other things—just what, I don't know."

He stood near the centre-table and let his eyes roam over the objects of the room. Presently his gaze came to rest on a low wicker reading-chair the right arm of which was shaped into a book-rest. It stood within a few feet of the wall opposite to the fireplace, facing a narrow section of book-shelves that was surmounted by a replica of the Capitoline Museum bust of Vespasian.

"Most untidy," he murmured. "I'm sure that chair wasn't left in that position twelve years ago."

He moved forward, and stood looking down at it musingly. Instinctively Markham and Heath followed him; and then they saw the thing that he had been contemplating. On the table-arm of the chair was a deep saucer in which stood the thick stub of a candle. The saucer was almost filled with smoky wax drippings.

"It took many candles to fill that dish," commented Vance; "and I doubt if the departed Tobias did his reading by candlelight." He touched the seat and the back of the chair, and then examined his hand. "There's dust, but nowhere near a decade's accumulation. Some one has been browsing in this library rather recently; and he was dashed secretive about it. He didn't dare draw the shades or turn on the lights. He sat here with a single candle, sampling Tobias's brand of literature. And it apparently appealed to him, for this one saucer contains evidence of many bookish nights. How many other saucers of paraffin there were we don't know."

"The old lady could tell us who had a chance to put the key back this morning after hiding the galoshes," offered Heath.

"No one put the key back this morning, Sergeant. The person who was in the habit of visiting here wouldn't have stolen it and returned it on each occasion when he could have had a duplicate made in fifteen minutes."

"I guess you're right." The Sergeant was sorely perplexed. "But as long as we don't know who's got the key, we're no better off than we were."

"We're not quite through yet with our scrutiny of the library," rejoined Vance. "As I told Mr. Markham at lunch, my main ob-

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ject in coming here was to ascertain Tobias's taste in literature."

"A lot of good that'll do you!"

"One never can tell. Tobias, remember, bequeathed his library to the Police Department. . . . Let's see with what tomes the old boy whiled away his inactive hours."

Vance took out his monocle and, polishing it carefully, fitted it to his eye. Then he turned to the nearest book-shelves. I stepped forward and looked over his shoulder; and, as my glance ran over the dusty titles, I could scarcely suppress an exclamation of amazement. Here was one of the most complete and unusual private libraries of criminology in America—and I was familiar with many of the country's famous collections. Crime in all its phases and ramifications was represented. Rare old treatises, long out of print and now the delight of bibliophiles, shouldered one another in compact tiers on Tobias Greene's shelves.

Nor were the subjects of these books limited to a narrow interpretation of criminology. All the various allied branches of the subject were represented. There were entire sections devoted to insanity and cretinism, social and criminal pathology, suicide, pauperism and philanthropy, prison-reform, prostitution and morphinism, capital punishment, abnormal psychology, legal codes, the argot of the underworld and code-writing, toxicology, and police methods. The volumes were in many languages—English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Swedish, Russian, Dutch, and Latin.*

Vance's eyes sparkled as he moved along the crowded shelves. Markham also was deeply interested; and Heath, bending here and there toward a volume, registered an expression of bewildered curiosity.

"My word!" murmured Vance. "No wonder your department, Sergeant, was chosen as the future custodian of these tomes. What a collection! Extr'ordin'ry!—Aren't you glad, Markham, you wangled the old lady into relinquishing the key——?"

Suddenly he stiffened and jerked his head toward the door, at the same time lifting his hand for silence. I, too, had heard a slight noise in the hall, like some one brushing against the woodwork of the door, but had thought nothing of it. For a few moments we waited tensely. But no further sound came to us, and Vance stepped quickly to the door and drew it open. The hall was empty. He stood on the threshold for a while listening. Then he closed the door, and turned again to the room.

* Among the volumes of Tobias Greene's library I may mention the following as typical of the entire collection: Heinroth's "De morborum animi et pathematum animi differentia," Hoh's "De maniæ pathologia," P. S. Knight's "Observations on the Causes, Symptoms, and Treatment of Derangement of the Mind," Krafft-Ebing's "Grundzüge der Kriminal-Psychologie," Bailey's "Diary of a Resurrectionist," Lange's "Om Arvelighedens Inflydelse i Sindssygedommene," Leuret's "Fragments psychologiques sur la folie," D'Aguanno's "Recensioni di antropologia giuridica," Amos's "Crime and Civilization," Andronico's "*Studi clinici sul delitto*," Lombroso's "Uomo Delinquente," de Aramburu's "La nueva ciencia penal," Bleakley's "Some Distinguished Victims of the Scaffold," Arenal's "Psychologie comparée du criminel," Aubry's "De l'homicide commis par la femme," Beccaria's "Crimes and Punishments," Benedikt's "Anatomical Studies upon the Brains of Criminals," Bittinger's "Crimes of Passion and of Reflection," Bosselli's "Nuovi studi sul tatuaggio nei criminali," Favalli's "La delinquenza in rapporto alla civiltà," de Feyfer's "Verhandeling over den Kindermoord," Fuld's "Der Realismus und das Strafrecht," Hamilton's "Scientific Detection of Crime," von Holtzendorff's "Das Irische Gefängnissystem insbesondere die Zwischenanstalten vor der Entlassung der Sträflinge," Jardine's "Criminal Trials," Lacassagne's "L'homme criminel comparé à l'homme primitif," Llanos y Torriglia's "Ferri y su escuela," Owen Luke's "History of Crime in England," MacFarlane's "Lives and Exploits of Banditti," M'Levy's "Curiosities of Crime in Edinburgh," the "Complete Newgate Calendar," Pomeroy's "German and French Criminal Procedure," Rizzone's "Delinquenza e punibilità," Rosenblatt's "Skizzen aus der Verbrecherwelt," Soury's "Le crime et les criminels," Wey's "Criminal Anthropology," Amadei's "Crani d'assassini," Benedikt's "Der Raubthiertypus am menschlichen Gehirne," Fasini's "Studi su delinquenti femmine," Mills's "Arrested and Aberrant Development and Gyres in the Brain of Paranoiacs and Criminals," de Paoli's "Quattro crani di delinquenti," Zuckerkandl's "Morphologie des Gesichtsschädels," Bergonzoli's "Sui pazzi criminali in Italia," Brierre de Boismont's "Rapports de la folie suicide avec la folie homicide," Buchnet's "The Relation of Madness to Crime," Calucci's "Il jure penale e la freniatria," Davey's "Insanity and Crime," Morel's "Le procès Chorinski," Parrot's "Sur la monomanie homicide," Savage's "Moral Insanity," Teed's "On Mind, Insanity, and Criminality," Worckmann's "On Crime and Insanity," Vaucher's "Système préventif des délits et des crimes," Thacker's "Psychology of Vice and Crime," Tarde's "La Criminalité Comparée," Tamassia's "*Gli ultimi studi sulla criminalità*," Sikes's "Studies of Assassination," Senior's "Remarkable Crimes and Trials in Germany," Savarini's "Vexata Quæstio," Sampson's "Rationale of Crime," Noellner's "Kriminal-psychologische Denkwürdigkeiten," Sighele's "La foule criminelle," and Korsakoff's "Kurs psichiatrii."

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"I could have sworn some one was listening in the hall."

"I heard a rustle of some kind," Markham corroborated him. "I took it for granted it was Sproot or the maid passing by."

"Why should anybody's hanging round the hall worry us, Mr. Vance?" Heath asked.

"I really couldn't say, don't y' know. But it bothers me, nevertheless. If some one was at the door listening, it shows that our presence here has produced a state of anxiety in the person privy to the fact. It's possible, d' ye see, that some one is desirous of ascertaining what we have found out."

"Well, I can't see that we've found out enough to make anybody lose any sleep," mumbled Heath.

"You're so discouraging, Sergeant." Vance sighed and went to the book-shelves in front of the wicker reading-chair. "There may be something in this section to cheer us. Let us see if there's a glad tiding or two written in the dust."

He struck match after match as he carefully inspected the tops of the books, beginning at the highest shelf and systematically scrutinizing the volumes of each row. He had reached the second shelf from the floor when he bent over curiously and gave a second long look at two thick gray volumes. Then, putting out the match, he took the volumes to the window.

"The thing is quite mad," he remarked, after a brief examination. "These are the only books within arm's reach of the chair that have been handled recently. And what do you think they are? An old two-volume edition of Professor Hans Gross's 'Handbuch für Untersuchungsrichter als System der Kriminalistik,' or—to claw the title loosely into the vulgate—'A Handbook on the Criminal Sciences for Examining Magistrates.'" He gave Markham a look of facetious reproach. "I say, you haven't, by any chance, been spending your nights in this library learning how to ballyrag suspects?"

Markham ignored his levity. He recognized the outward sign of Vance's inner uneasiness.

"The apparently irrelevant theme of the book," he returned, "might indicate a mere coincidence between the visits of some person to this room and the crimes committed in the house."

Vance made no answer. He thoughtfully returned the books to their place and ran his eye over the remaining volumes of the bottom shelf. Suddenly he knelt down and struck another match.

"Here are several books out of place." I detected a subdued note of eagerness in his voice. "They belong in other sections; and they've been crowded in here a little out of alignment. Moreover, they're innocent of dust. . . . 'Pon my soul, Markham, here's a coincidence for your sceptical legal mind! Lend an ear to these titles: 'Poisons: Their Effects and Detection,' by Alexander Wynter Blyth,* and 'Text-book of Medical Jurisprudence, Toxicology, and Public Health,' by John Glaister, professor of Forensic Medicine at the University of Glasgow. And here we have Friedrich Brügelmann's 'Uber hysterische Dämmerzustände,' and Schwarzwald's 'Über Hystero-Paralyse und Somnambulismus.'—I say! That's deuced queer. . . ."

He rose and walked up and down agitatedly.

"No—no; absolutely not," he muttered. "It simply can't be. . . . Why should Von Blon lie to us about her?"

We all knew what was in his mind. Even Heath sensed it at once, for, though he did not speak German, the titles of the two German books—especially the latter—needed no translation to be understood. Hysteria and twilight sleep! Hysterical paralysis and somnambulism! The gruesome and terrible implication in these two titles, and their possible relation to the sinister tragedies of the Greene mansion, sent a chill of horror over me.

Vance stopped his restless pacing and fixed a grave gaze on Markham.

"This thing gets deeper and deeper. Something unthinkable is going on here.—Come, let us get out of this polluted room. It has told us its gibbering, nightmarish story. And now we will have to interpret it—find some glimmer of sanity in its black suggestions.—Sergeant, will you draw the curtains while I straighten these books? We'd best leave no evidence of our visit."

XIX

SHERRY AND PARALYSIS

(Wednesday, December 1; 4.30 p. m.)

When we returned to Mrs. Greene's room the old lady was apparently sleeping peace-

* Doctor Blyth was one of the defense witnesses in the Crippen trial.

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fully and we did not disturb her. Heath gave the key to Nurse O'Brien with instructions to replace it in the jewel-case, and we went down-stairs.

Although it was but a little past four o'clock, the early winter twilight had already descended. Sproot had not yet lighted the lamps, and the lower hall was in semidarkness. A ghostly atmosphere pervaded the house. Even the silence was oppressive, and seemed fraught with the spirit of commination. We went straight to the hall table where we had thrown our coats, eager to get out into the open air.

But we were not to shake the depressing influence of the old mansion so quickly. We had scarcely reached the table when there came a slight stirring of the portières of the archway opposite to the drawing-room, and a tense, whispered voice said:

"Mr. Vance—please!"

We turned, startled. There, just inside of the reception-room, hiding behind the heavy draperies, stood Ada, her face a patch of ghastly white in the gathering gloom. With one finger placed on her lips for silence, she beckoned to us; and we stepped softly into the chill, unused room.

"There's something I must tell you," she said, in a half-whisper, "—something terrible! I was going to telephone you to-day, but I was afraid. . . ." A fit of trembling seized her.

"Don't be frightened, Ada," Vance encouraged her soothingly. "In a few days all these awful things will be over.—What have you to tell us?"

She made an effort to draw herself together, and when the tremor had passed she went on hesitantly.

"Last night—it was long after midnight—I woke, and felt hungry. So I got up, slipped on a wrap, and stole down-stairs. Cook always leaves something in the pantry for me. . . ." Again she stopped, and her haunted eyes searched our faces. "But when I reached the lower landing of the stairs I heard a soft, shuffling sound in the hall—far back, near the library door. My heart was in my mouth, but I made myself look over the banister. And just then — some one struck a match. . . ."

Her trembling began afresh, and she clutched Vance's arm with both hands. I was afraid the girl was going to faint, and I moved closer to her; but Vance's voice seemed to steady her.

"Who was it, Ada?"

She caught her breath and looked about her, her face the picture of deadly fear. Then she leaned forward.

"It was mother! . . . *And she was walking*!"

The dread significance of this revelation chilled us all into silence. After a moment a choked whistle escaped Heath; and Markham threw back his head like a man shaking himself out of an encroaching spell of hypnosis. It was Vance who first recovered himself sufficiently to speak.

"Your mother was near the library door?"

"Yes; and it seemed as though she held a key in her hand."

"Was she carrying anything else?" Vance's effort at calmness was only half successful.

"I didn't notice—I was too terrified."

"Could she, for instance, have been carrying a pair of galoshes?" he persisted.

"She might have been. I don't know. She had on her long Oriental shawl, and it fell down about her in folds. Maybe under the shawl. . . . Or she might have put them down when she struck the match. I only know I saw her—moving slowly . . . there in the darkness."

The memory of that unbelievable vision completely took possession of the girl. Her eyes stared, trancelike, into the deepening shadows.

Markham cleared his throat nervously.

"You say yourself it was dark in the hall last night, Miss Greene. Perhaps your fears got the better of you. Are you sure it might not have been Hemming or the cook?"

She brought her eyes back to Markham with sudden resentment.

"No!" Then her voice took on its former note of terror. "It was mother. The match was burning close to her face, and there was a terrible look in her eyes. I was only a few feet from her—looking straight down on her."

Her hold on Vance's arm tightened, and once more her agonized gaze turned to him.

"Oh, what does it mean? I thought—I thought mother could never walk again."

Vance ignored her anguished appeal.

"Tell me this, for it's very important: did your mother see you?"

"I—don't know." Her words were scarcely

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audible. "I drew back and ran softly up the stairs. Then I locked myself in my room."

Vance did not speak at once. He regarded the girl for a moment, and then gave her a slow, comforting smile.

"And I think your room is the best place for you now," he said. "Don't worry over what you saw; and keep what you have told us to yourself. There's nothing to be afraid of. Certain types of paralytics have been known to walk in their sleep under the stress of shock or excitement. Anyway, we'll arrange for the new nurse to sleep in your room to-night." And with a friendly pat on her arm he sent her up-stairs.

After Heath had given Miss O'Brien the necessary instructions we left the house and walked toward First Avenue.

"Good God, Vance!" said Markham huskily. "We've got to move quickly. That child's story opens up new and frightful possibilities."

"Couldn't you get a commitment for the old woman to some sanitarium to-morrow, sir?" asked Heath.

"On what grounds? It's a pathological case, pure and simple. We haven't a scrap of evidence."

"I shouldn't attempt it, in any event," interposed Vance. "We mustn't be hasty. There are several conclusions to be drawn from Ada's story; and if the thing that all of us is thinking should be wrong, we'd only make matters worse by a false move. We might delay the slaughter for the time being; but we'd learn nothing. And our only hope is to find out—some way—what's at the bottom of this atrocious business."

"Yeh? And how are we going to do that, Mr. Vance?" Heath spoke with despair.

"I don't know now. But the Greene household is safe for to-night anyway; and that gives us a little time. I think I'll have another talk with Von Blon. Doctors—especially the younger ones—are apt to give snap diagnoses."

Heath had hailed a taxicab, and we were headed down-town along Third Avenue.

"It can certainly do no harm," agreed Markham. "And it might bring forth something suggestive. When will you tackle him?"

Vance was gazing out of the window.

"Why not at once?" Suddenly his mood had changed. "Here we are in the Forties. And tea-time! What could be more opportune?"

He leaned over and gave the chauffeur an order. In a few minutes the taxicab drew up to the curb before Von Blon's brown-stone residence.

The doctor received us apprehensively.

"Nothing wrong, I hope?" he asked, trying to read our faces.

"Oh, no," Vance answered easily. "We were passing and thought we'd drop in for a dish of tea and a medical chat."

Von Blon studied him with a slight suspicion.

"Very well. You gentlemen shall have both." He rang for his man. "But I can do even better. I've some old Amontillado sherry——"

"My word!" Vance bowed ceremoniously and turned to Markham. "You see how fortune favors her punctual children?"

The wine was brought and carefully decanted.

Vance took up his glass and sipped it. One would have thought, from his manner, that nothing in the world at that moment was as important as the quality of the wine.

"Ah, my dear doctor," he remarked, with some ostentation, "the blender on the sunny Andalusian slopes unquestionably had many rare and valuable butts with which to glorify this vintage. There was little need for the addition of *vino dulce* that year; but then, the Spaniards always sweeten their wine, probably because the English object to the slightest dryness. And it's the English, you know, who buy all the best sherries. They have always loved their 'sherris-sack'; and many a British bard has immortalized it in song. Ben Jonson sang its praises, and so did Tom Moore and Byron. But it was Shakespeare—an ardent lover of sherry himself—who penned the greatest and most passionate panegyric to it. You remember Falstaff's apostrophe?—'It ascends me into the brain; dries me there all the foolish and dull and crudy vapors which environ it; makes it apprehensive, quick, forgetive, full of nimble, fiery and delectable shapes. . . .' Sherry, you probably know, doctor, was once regarded as a cure for gout and other malaises of faulty metabolism."

He paused and put down his glass.

"I wonder that you haven't prescribed this delicious sherry for Mrs. Greene long ago.

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I'm sure she would serve you with a writ of confiscation if she knew you had it."

"The fact is," Von Blon returned, "I once took her a bottle, and she gave it to Chester. She doesn't care for wine. I remember my father's telling me she objected violently to her husband's well-stocked cellar."

"Your father died, did he not, before Mrs. Greene became paralyzed?" Vance asked incuriously.

"Yes—about a year."

"And was yours the only diagnosis made of her case?"

Von Blon looked at him with an air of gentle surprise.

"Yes. I saw no necessity of calling in any of the bigwigs. The symptoms were clear-cut and conformed with the anamnesis. Furthermore, everything since then has confirmed my diagnosis."

"And yet, doctor"—Vance spoke with great deference—"something has occurred which, from the layman's point of view, tends to cast doubt on the accuracy of that diagnosis. Therefore, I feel sure you will forgive me when I ask you quite frankly if it would not be possible to place another, and perhaps less serious, interpretation on Mrs. Greene's invalidism."

Von Blon appeared greatly puzzled.

"There is," he said, "not the slightest possibility that Mrs. Greene is suffering from any disease other than an organic paralysis of both legs—a paraplegia, in fact, of the entire lower part of the body."

"If you were to see Mrs. Greene move her legs, what would be your mental reaction?"

Von Blon stared at him incredulously. Then he forced a laugh.

"My mental reaction? I'd know my liver was out of order, and that I was having hallucinations."

"And if you knew your liver was functioning perfectly—then what?"

"I'd immediately become a devout believer in miracles."

Vance smiled pleasantly.

"I sincerely hope it won't come to that. And yet so-called therapeutic miracles have happened."

"I'll admit that medical history is filled with what the uninitiated call miraculous cures. But there is sound pathology beneath all of them. In Mrs. Greene's case, however, I can see no loophole for error. If she should move her legs, it would contravert all the known laws of physiology."

"By the by, doctor"—Vance put the question abruptly—"are you familiar with Brügelmann's 'Über hysterische Dämmerzustände'?"

"No—I can't say that I am."

"Or with Schwarzwald's 'Über Hystero-Paralyse und Somnambulismus'?"

Von Blon hesitated, and his eyes were focussed intently like those of a man who is thinking rapidly.

"I know Schwarzwald, of course," he answered. "But I'm ignorant of the particular work you mention. . . ." Slowly a look of amazement dawned on his face. "Good heavens! You're not trying to connect the subjects of these books with Mrs. Greene's condition, are you?"

"If I were to tell you that both of these books are in the Greene mansion, what would you say?"

"I'd say their presence is no more relevant to the situation there than would be a copy of 'Die Leiden des jungen Werther' or Heine's 'Romanzero.'"

"I'm sorry I can't agree with you," returned Vance politely. "They are certainly relevant to our investigation, and I had hoped you might be able to explain the connection."

Von Blon appeared to ponder the matter, his face the picture of perplexity.

"I wish I could help you," he said, after several moments. Then he glanced up quickly: a new light had come into his eyes. "Permit me to suggest, sir, that you are laboring under a misapprehension as to the correct scientific connotation of the words in the titles of these two books. I have had occasion to do considerable reading along psychoanalytic lines; and both Freud and Jung use the terms '*Somnambulismus*' and '*Dämmerzustände*' in an entirely different sense from our common use of the terms 'somnambulism' and 'twilight sleep.' '*Somnambulismus,*' in the terminology of psychopathology and abnormal psychology, is employed in connection with ambivalence and dual personality: it designates the actions of the submerged, or subconscious, self in cases of aphasia, amnesia, and the like. It does not refer to one's walking in one's sleep. For instance, in psychic hysteria where one loses one's memory and adopts a new personality, the subject is called a '*Somnambule.*' It

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is the same as what the newspapers commonly refer to as an 'amnesia victim.'"

He rose and went to a bookcase. After a few moments' search he took down several volumes.

"Here we have, for example, an old monograph by Freud and Breuer, written in 1893 and entitled 'Über den psychischen Mechanismus der hysterischen Phenomene.' If you care to take the trouble to read it, you will see that it is an exposition of the application of the term '*Somnambulismus*' to certain temporary neurotic derangements.—And here also is Freud's 'Traumdeutung,' published in 1894, in which this terminology is explained and amplified.—In addition to these, I have here 'Nervöse Angstzustände,' by Stekel, who, though he leads one of the most important schisms in the Freudian school, uses the same nomenclature in referring to split personality." He laid the three books on the table before Vance. "You may take them along if you like. They may throw some light on the quandary you are in."

"You are inclined to believe, then, that both Schwarzwald and Brügelmann refer to waking psychic states rather than the more common type of somnambulism?"

"Yes, I am inclined to that belief. I know Schwarzwald was a former lecturer at the Psychopatisches Institut, in constant contact with Freud and his teachings. But, as I told you, I am not familiar with either of the books."

"How would you account for the term 'hysteria' in both titles?"

"Its presence there is in no way contradictory. Aphasia, amnesia, aphonia—and often anosmia and apnœa—are symptoms of hysteria. And hysterical paralysis is quite common. There are many cases of paralytics who have been unable to move a muscle for years, as a result of sheer hysteria."

"Ah, exactly!" Vance picked up his glass and drained it. "That brings me to a rather unusual request I desire to make.—As you know, the papers are waxing severe in their criticism of the police and the District Attorney's office, and are accusing of negligence every one connected with the investigation of the Greene case. Therefore Mr. Markham has decided that it might be advisable for him to possess a report of Mrs. Greene's physical condition which would carry the very highest expert authority. And I was going to suggest that, merely as a matter of formal routine, we get such a report from, let us say, Doctor Felix Oppenheimer."*

Von Blon did not speak for several minutes. He sat toying nervously with his glass, his eyes fixed with intent calculation on Vance.

"It might be well for you to have the report," he acceded at last, "if only to dispel your own doubts on the subject.—No, I have no objection to the plan. I will be very glad to make the arrangements."

Vance rose.

"That's very generous of you, doctor. But I must urge you to attend to it without delay."

"I understand perfectly. I will get in touch with Doctor Oppenheimer in the morning and explain to him the official character of the situation. I'm sure he will expedite matters."

When we were again in the taxicab Markham gave voice to his perplexity.

"Von Blon strikes me as a particularly able and trustworthy man. And yet he has obviously gone wofully astray in regard to Mrs. Greene's illness. I fear he's in for a shock when he hears what Oppenheimer has to say after the examination."

"Y' know, Markham," said Vance sombrely, "I'll feel infinitely bucked if we succeed in getting that report from Oppenheimer."

"Succeed! What do you mean?"

"'Pon my word, I don't know what I mean. I only know that there's a black terrible intrigue of some kind going on at the Greene house. And we don't yet know who's back of it. But it's some one who's watching us, who knows every move we make, and is thwarting us at every turn."

XX

THE FOURTH TRAGEDY

(Thursday, December 2; forenoon)

The following day was one that will ever remain in my memory. Despite the fact that what happened had been foreseen by all of us, nevertheless when it actually came it left us as completely stunned as if it had been wholly

* Doctor Felix Oppenheimer was then the leading authority on paralysis in America. He has since returned to Germany, where he now holds the chair of neurology at the University of Freiburg.

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unexpected. Indeed, the very horror that informed our anticipation tended to intensify the enormity of the event.

The day broke dark and threatening. A damp chill was in the air; and the leaden skies clung close to the earth with suffocating menace. The weather was like a symbol of our gloomy spirits.

Vance rose early, and, though he said little, I knew the case was preying on his mind. After breakfast he sat before the fire for over an hour sipping his coffee and smoking. Then he made an attempt to interest himself in an old French edition of "Till Ulenspiegel," but, failing, took down volume seven of Osler's "Modern Medicine" and turned to Buzzard's article on myelitis. For an hour he read with despairing concentration. At last he returned the book to the shelves.

At half past eleven Markham telephoned to inform us that he was leaving the office immediately for the Greene mansion and would stop en route to pick us up. He refused to say more, and hung up the receiver abruptly.

It wanted ten minutes of being noon when he arrived; and his expression of grim discouragement told us more plainly than words that another tragedy had occurred. We had on our coats in readiness and accompanied him at once to the car.

"And who is it this time?" asked Vance, as we swung into Park Avenue.

"Ada." Markham spoke bitterly through his teeth.

"I was afraid of that, after what she told us yesterday.—With poison, I suppose."

"Yes—the morphine."

"Still, it's an easier death than strychnine-poisoning."

"She's not dead, thank God!" said Markham. "That is, she was still alive when Heath phoned."

"Heath? Was he at the house?"

"No. The nurse notified him at the Homicide Bureau, and he phoned me from there. He'll probably be at the Greenes' when we arrive."

"You say she isn't dead?"

"Drumm—he's the official police surgeon Moran stationed in the Narcoss Flats—got there immediately, and had managed to keep her alive up to the time the nurse phoned."

"Sproot's signal worked all right, then?"

"Apparently. And I want to say, Vance, that I'm damned grateful to you for that suggestion to have a doctor on hand."

When we arrived at the Greene mansion Heath, who had been watching for us, opened the door.

"She ain't dead," he greeted us in a stage whisper; and then drew us into the reception-room to explain his secretive manner. "Nobody in the house except Sproot and O'Brien knows about this poisoning yet. Sproot found her, and then pulled down all the front curtains in this room—which was the signal agreed on. When Doc Drumm hopped across Sproot was waiting with the door open, and took him up-stairs without anybody seeing him. The doc sent for O'Brien, and after they'd worked on the girl for a while he told her to notify the Bureau. They're both up in the room now with the doors locked."

"You did right in keeping the thing quiet," Markham told him. "If Ada recovers we can hush it up and perhaps learn something from her."

"That's what I was thinking, sir. I told Sproot I'd wring his scrawny neck if he spilled anything to anybody."

"And," added Vance, "he bowed politely and said 'Yes, sir.' "

"You bet your life he did!"

"Where is the rest of the household at present?" Markham asked.

"Miss Sibella's in her room. She had breakfast in bed at half past ten and told the maid she was going back to sleep. The old lady's also asleep. The maid and the cook are in the back of the house somewhere."

"Has Von Blon been here this morning?" put in Vance.

"Sure he's been here—he comes regular. O'Brien said he called at ten, sat with the old lady about an hour, and then went away."

"And he hasn't been notified about the morphine?"

"What's the use? Drumm's a good doctor, and Von Blon might blab about it to Sibella or somebody."

"Quite right." Vance nodded his approval.

We re-entered the hall and divested ourselves of our wraps.

"While we're waiting for Doctor Drumm," said Markham, "we might as well find out what Sproot knows."

We went into the drawing-room, and Heath yanked the bell-cord. The old butler came directly and stood before us without the

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slightest trace of emotion. His imperturbability struck me as inhuman.

Markham beckoned him to come nearer.

"Now, Sproot, tell us exactly what took place."

"I was in the kitchen resting, sir"—the man's voice was as wooden as usual—"and I was just looking at the clock and thinking I would resume my duties, when the bell of Miss Ada's room rang. Each bell, you understand, sir——"

"Never mind that! What time was it?"

"It was exactly eleven o'clock. And, as I said, Miss Ada's bell rang. I went right upstairs and knocked on her door; but, as there was no answer, I took the liberty of opening it and looking into the room. Miss Ada was lying on the bed; but it was not a natural attitude—if you understand what I mean. And then I noticed a very peculiar thing, sir. Miss Sibella's little dog was on the bed——"

"Was there a chair or stool by the bed?" interrupted Vance.

"Yes, sir, I believe there was. An ottoman."

"So the dog could have climbed on the bed unassisted?"

"Oh, yes, sir."

"Very good. Continue."

"Well, the dog was on the bed, and he looked like he was standing on his hind legs playing with the bell-cord. But the peculiar thing was that his hind legs were on Miss Ada's face, and she didn't seem to even notice it. Inwardly I was a bit startled; and I went to the bed and picked up the dog. Then I discovered that several threads of the silk tassel on the end of the cord had got caught between his teeth; and—would you believe it, sir?—it was him who had really rung Miss Ada's bell. . . ."

"Amazin'," murmured Vance. "What then, Sproot?"

"I shook the young lady, although I had little hope of waking her after Miss Sibella's dog had been trampling over her face without her knowing it. Then I came down-stairs and drew the curtains in the reception-room as I had been instructed to do in case of an emergency. When the doctor arrived I showed him to Miss Ada's room."

"And that's all you know?"

"Everything, sir."

"Thank you, Sproot." Markham rose impatiently. "And now you might let Doctor Drumm know that we are here."

It was the nurse, however, who came to the drawing-room a few minutes later. She was a medium-sized well-built woman of thirty-five, with shrewd brown eyes, a thin mouth and a firm chin, and a general air of competency. She greeted Heath with a companionable wave of the hand and bowed to the rest of us with aloof formality.

"Doc Drumm can't leave his patient just now," she informed us, seating herself. "So he sent me along. He'll be down presently."

"And what's the report?" Markham was still standing.

"She'll live, I guess. We've been giving her passive exercise and artificial breathing for half an hour, and the doc hopes to have her walking before long."

Markham, his nervousness somewhat abated, sat down again.

"Tell us all you can, Miss O'Brien. Was there any evidence as to how the poison was administered?"

"Nothing but an empty bouillon cup." The woman was ill at ease. "I guess you'll find remains of morphine in it, all right."

"Why do you think the drug was given by means of the bouillon?"

She hesitated and shot Heath an uneasy look.

"It's this way. I always bring a cup of bouillon to Mrs. Greene a little before eleven in the morning; and if Miss Ada's around I bring two cups—that's the old lady's orders. This morning the girl was in the room when I went down to the kitchen, so I brought up two cups. But Mrs. Greene was alone when I returned, so I gave the old lady hers and put the other cup in Miss Ada's room on the table by the bed. Then I went into the hall to call her. She was down-stairs—in the living-room, I guess. Anyhow, she came up right away, and, as I had some mending to do for Mrs. Greene, I went to my room on the third floor. . . ."

"Therefore," interpolated Markham, "the bouillon was on Miss Ada's table unprotected for a minute or so after you had left the room and before Miss Ada came up from the lower hall."

"It wasn't over twenty seconds. And I was right outside the door all the time. Furthermore, the door was open, and I'd have heard any one in the room." The woman was obviously defending herself desperately against the imputation of negligence in Markham's remark.

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Vance put the next question.

"Did you see any one else in the hall besides Miss Ada?"

"No one except Doctor Von Blon. He was in the lower hall getting into his coat when I called down."

"Did he leave the house at once?"

"Why—yes."

"You actually saw him pass through the door?"

"No-o. But he was putting on his coat, and he had said good-by to Mrs. Greene and me. . . ."

"When?"

"Not two minutes before. I'd met him coming out of Mrs. Greene's door just as I brought in the bouillon."

"And Miss Sibella's dog—did you notice it in the hall anywhere?"

"No; it wasn't around when I was there."

Vance lay back drowsily in his chair, and Markham again took up the interrogation.

"How long did you remain in your room, Miss O'Brien, after you had called Miss Ada?"

"Until the butler came and told me that Doctor Drumm wanted me."

"And how much later would you say that was?"

"About twenty minutes—maybe a little longer."

Markham smoked pensively a while.

"Yes," he commented at length; "it plainly appears that the morphine was somehow added to the bouillon.—You'd better return to Doctor Drumm now, Miss O'Brien. We'll wait here for him."

"Hell!" growled Heath, after the nurse had gone up-stairs. "She's the best woman for this sort of a job that we've got. And now she goes and falls down on it."

"I wouldn't say she'd fallen down exactly, Sergeant," dissented Vance, his eyes fixed dreamily on the ceiling. "After all, she only stepped into the hall for a few seconds to summon the young lady to her matutinal broth. And if the morphine hadn't found its way into the bouillon this morning it would have done so to-morrow, or the day after, or some time in the future. In fact, the propitious gods may actually have favored us this morning as they did the Grecian host before the walls of Troy."

"They will have favored us," observed Markham, "if Ada recovers and can tell us who visited her room before she drank the bouillon."

The silence that ensued was terminated by the entrance of Doctor Drumm, a youthful, earnest man with an aggressive bearing. He sank heavily into a chair and wiped his face with a large silk handkerchief.

"She's pulled through," he announced. "I happened to be standing by the window looking out—sheer chance—when I saw the curtains go down—saw 'em before Hennessey * did. I grabbed up my bag and the pulmotor, and was over here in a jiffy. The butler was waiting at the door, and took me up-stairs. Queer crab, that butler. The girl was lying across the bed, and it didn't take but one look to see that I wasn't dealing with strychnine. No spasms or sweating or *risus sardonicus,* you understand. Quiet and peaceful; shallow breathing; cyanosis. Morphine evidently. Then I looked at her pupils. Pin-points. No doubt now. So I sent for the nurse and got busy."

"A close call?" asked Markham.

"Close enough." The doctor nodded importantly. "You can't tell what would have happened if somebody hadn't got to her in a hurry. I figured she'd got all six grains that were lost, and gave her a good stiff hypo of atropine—a fiftieth. It reacted like a shot. Then I washed her stomach out with potassium permanganate. After that I gave her artificial respiration—she didn't seem to need it, but I wasn't taking any chances. Then the nurse and I got busy exercising her arms and legs, trying to keep her awake. Tough work, that. Hope I don't get pneumonia sweating there with the windows all open. . . . Well, so it went. Her breathing kept getting better, and I gave her another hundredth of atropine for good measure. At last I managed to get her on her feet. The nurse is walking her up and down now." He mopped his face again with a triumphant flourish of the handkerchief.

"We're greatly indebted to you, doctor," said Markham. "It's quite possible you have been the means of solving this case.—When will we be able to question your patient?"

"She'll be loggy and nauseated all day—kind of general collapse, you understand, with painful breathing, drowsiness, headache, and that sort of thing—no fit condition to

* Hennessey was the detective stationed in the Narcoss Flats to watch the Greene mansion.

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answer questions. But to-morrow morning you'll be able to talk to her as much as you like."

"That will be satisfactory. And what of the bouillon cup the nurse mentioned?"

"It tasted bitter—morphine, all right."

As Drumm finished speaking Sproot passed down the hall to the front door. A moment later Von Blon paused at the archway and looked into the drawing-room. The strained silence which followed the exchange of greetings caused him to study us with growing alarm.

"Has anything happened?" he finally asked.

It was Vance who rose and, with quick decision, assumed the rôle of spokesman.

"Yes, doctor. Ada has been poisoned with morphine. Doctor Drumm here happened to be in the Narcoss Flats opposite and was called in."

"And Sibella—is she all right?" Von Blon spoke excitedly.

"Oh, quite."

A relieved sigh escaped him, and he sank into a chair.

"Tell me about it. When was the—the murder discovered?"

Drumm was about to correct him when Vance said quickly:

"Immediately after you left the house this morning. The poison was administered in the bouillon the nurse brought from the kitchen."

"But . . . how could that be?" Von Blon appeared unbelieving. "I was just going when she brought the bouillon. I saw her enter with it. How could the poison——?"

"That reminds me, doctor." Vance's tone was almost dulcet. "Did you, by any hap, go up-stairs again after you had donned your coat?"

Von Blon looked at him with outraged astonishment.

"Certainly not! I left the house immediately."

"That would have been just after the nurse called down to Ada."

"Why—yes. I believe the nurse did call down; and Ada went up-stairs at once—if I recall correctly."

Vance smoked a moment, his gaze resting curiously on the doctor's troubled face.

"I would suggest, without any intention of being impertinent, that your present visit follows rather closely upon your former one."

Von Blon's face clouded over, but I failed to detect any resentment in his expression.

"Quite true," he rejoined, and shifted his eyes. "The fact is, sir, that ever since those drugs disappeared from my case I've felt that something tragic was impending, and that I was in some way to blame. Whenever I'm in this neighborhood I can't resist the impulse to call here and—and see how things are going."

"Your anxiety is wholly understandable." Vance's tone was non-committal. Then he added negligently: "I suppose you will have no objection to Doctor Drumm continuing with Ada's case."

"Continuing?" Von Blon brought himself up straight in his chair. "I don't understand. You said a moment ago——"

"That Ada had been poisoned," finished Vance. "Quite. But d' ye see, she didn't die."

The other looked dumbfounded.

"Thank God for that!" he exclaimed, rising nervously.

"And," added Markham, "we are making no mention whatever of the episode. You will, therefore, be guided by our decision."

"Of course.—And is it permitted that I see Ada?"

Markham hesitated, and Vance answered.

"If you care to—certainly." He turned to Drumm. "Will you be so good as to accompany Doctor Von Blon?"

Drumm and Von Blon left the room together.

"I don't wonder he's on edge," commented Markham. "It's not pleasant to learn of people being poisoned with drugs lost through one's own carelessness."

"He wasn't worrying as much over Ada as he was over Sibella," remarked Heath.

"Observin' fella!" smiled Vance. "No, Sergeant; Ada's demise apparently bothered him far less than Sibella's possible state of health. . . . Now, I wonder what that means. It's an inveiglin' point. But—dash it all!—it everts my pet theory."

"So you have a theory." Markham spoke rebukingly.

"Oh, any number of 'em. And, I might add, they're all pets." Vance's lightness of tone meant merely that he was not ready to outline his suspicions; and Markham did not push the matter.

"We won't need any theories," declared Heath, "after we've heard what Ada's got to

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tell us. As soon as she talks to us to-morrow we'll be able to figure out who poisoned her."

"Perhaps," murmured Vance.

Drumm returned alone a few minutes later.

"Doctor Von Blon has stepped into the other girl's room. Said he'd be down right away."

"What did he have to say about your patient?" asked Vance.

"Nothing much. She put new energy into her walking the minute she saw him, though. Smiled at him, too, by Jove! A good sign, that. She'll come through fast. Lot of resistance in her."

Drumm had hardly ceased speaking when we heard Sibella's door close and the sound of descending footsteps on the stairs.

"By the by, doctor," said Vance to Von Blon as the latter re-entered the drawing-room, "have you seen Oppenheimer yet?"

"I saw him at eleven. The fact is, I went direct to him after leaving here this morning. He has agreed to make an examination to-morrow at ten o'clock."

"And was Mrs. Greene agreeable?"

"Oh, yes. I spoke to her about it this morning; and she made no objection whatever."

A short while later we took our departure. Von Blon accompanied us to the gate, and we saw him drive off in his car.

"We'll know more by this time to-morrow, I hope," said Markham on the way downtown. He was unwontedly depressed, and his eyes were greatly troubled. "You know, Vance, I'm almost appalled by the thought of what Oppenheimer's report may be."

No report was ever made by Doctor Oppenheimer, however. At some time between one and two the next morning Mrs. Greene died in convulsions as a result of strychnine-poisoning.

(To be concluded in the April number.)

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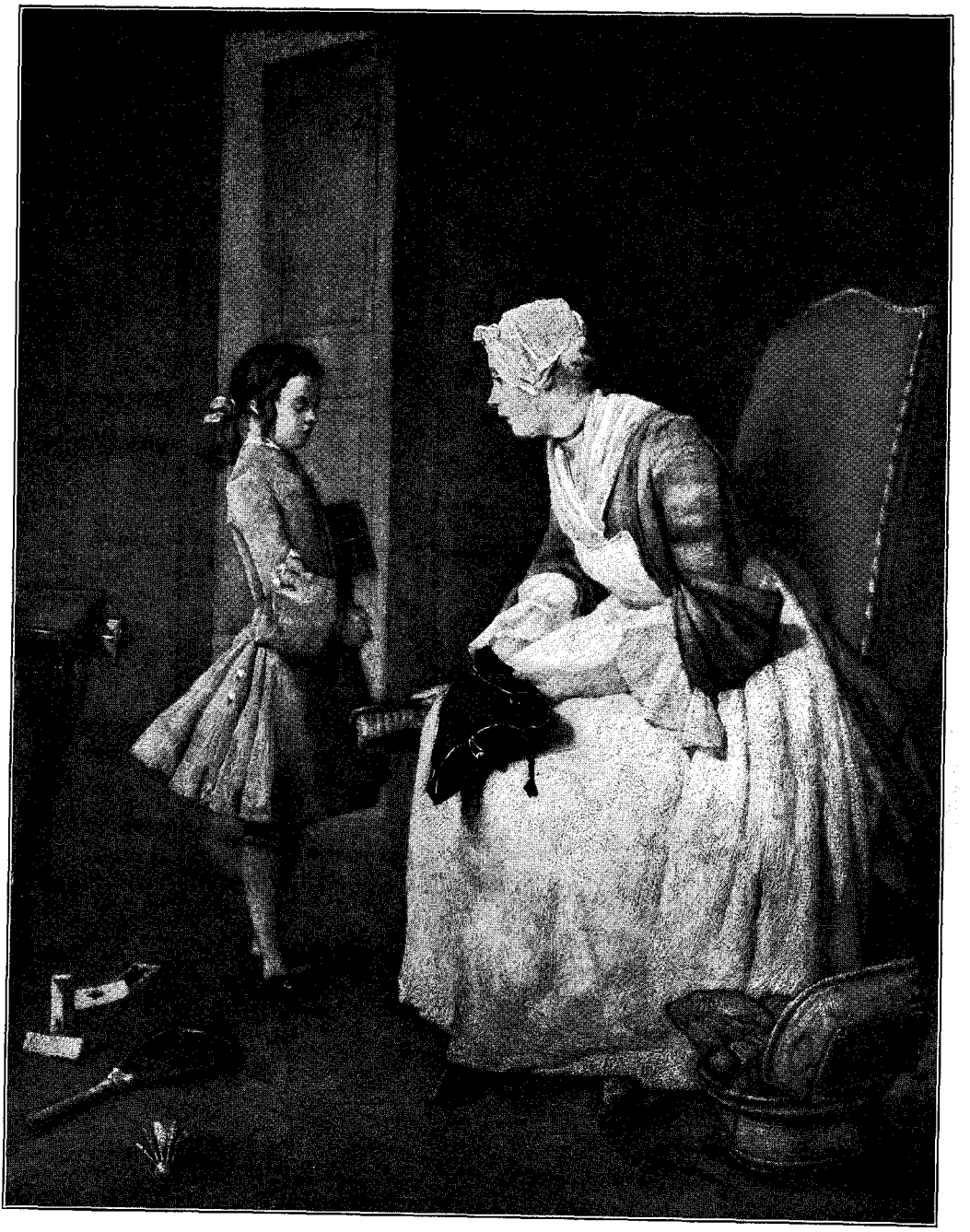

La Gouvernante.

From the painting by Chardin in the Lichtenstein Gallery at Vienna.

—See "The Field of Art," page 493.

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